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VOLUME 40
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ON THE COVER:
The GSG-922 has the look and feel of a real Government Model 1911, only in .22lr. Read more on this pistol on p46. Photo supplied by Tactical .22.

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Fit To Hunt?

YET ANOTHER hunting season has passed in the blink of an eye. It is almost Christmas and time to spend with loved ones, to reflect on the year gone by and to be thankful for the blessings we received.

Thinking back on my season I found myself seriously pondering whether I am really fit enough to enjoy hunting as an enriching sport and pastime. For the first time since I started hunting I had to take a serious look at myself. After professionally hunting full-time for almost two decades, I ended up sitting behind a desk for most of the past two years. During this hunting season I could clearly feel the results of this. I was hopelessly unfit to properly hunt on foot.

What would normally be an easy 80m shot over shooting sticks, after a two hour stalk suddenly became a difficult task with the crosshair dancing all over the animal's chest. Ascending a not so steep hill earlier the same day had me gasping for breath with muscles screaming for oxygen. Even a short crawl became a painful and very uncomfortable exercise.

Towards the end of the final two-hour stalk – the last 40 minutes in a dry riverbed – I was struggling to duck under overhanging branches and to keep up with the young guide in the thick sand. That was notwithstanding several short breaks during the stalk.

We managed to get within easy striking distance and after another short rest I finally took aim. I was having a hard time keeping the rifle steady and after the fact found that the bullet had landed four inches higher than I intended. The wildebeest dropped immediately, but in retrospect I should not have taken the shot. I was simply too unfit to hunt properly. Even the short break, while hoping the bull would stay put, was not

enough to ensure an accurate shot. I was selfishly putting the animal at risk of suffering from a wound as a result of my lack of proper preparation. I need to get fit before I take aim at any animal in the forthcoming season. In the meantime I declared myself unfit to hunt until such time as I am in reasonable physical condition. This proved an excellent incentive to get me exercising immediately.

As some consolation, the hunter accompanying me on this trip fared little better, in one instance, after firing two badly placed shots, he had to finish the animal off with a third that finally hit the vitals. Like me, he was totally unprepared for the reality of hunting in moderately difficult terrain. We were both carrying unnecessary body weight – too much of the “good life” had rendered us unable to enjoy the truly good life of being in the great outdoors.

As a professional hunter, this was one of the biggest problems I constantly faced: clients that were so out of shape that “real” hunting was near impossible. Hunting is a physically taxing sport and being unfit can spoil the whole outing. It does not only make for risky shots, but also detracts from your enjoyment of the experience. Struggling to breathe is hardly conducive to admiring the birdlife.

With the hunting season over, it is now time to start exercising by walking on roads and in the veld on a regular basis, later moving on to rougher terrain. In addition, exercises to strengthen the upper body help you to carry and handle the rifle easier, and to hold it steady for longer periods, facilitating more accurate shooting under field conditions.

Of course, being competent to hunt is not solely about physical fitness. Knowledge of wildlife and the ecology, plus a sense of moral responsibility are equally

important. The attitudes and actions of many so-called hunters leave much to be desired. Such types attach little importance to achieving a reasonable level of accuracy, choosing the right calibre for the job, declining to shoot from vehicles and using alcohol responsibly during a hunt. Though these may be in the minority, it takes only a few bad apples to tarnish the reputation of hunters as a whole.

I suppose much of this has to do with upbringing and training. In many European countries, would-be hunters have to undergo a lengthy and strict training and educational programme, not unlike a professional hunter's course, passing written and practical exams. Only when the individual has successfully passed the course can he apply for a hunting licence, and he may not hunt until this licence has been issued.

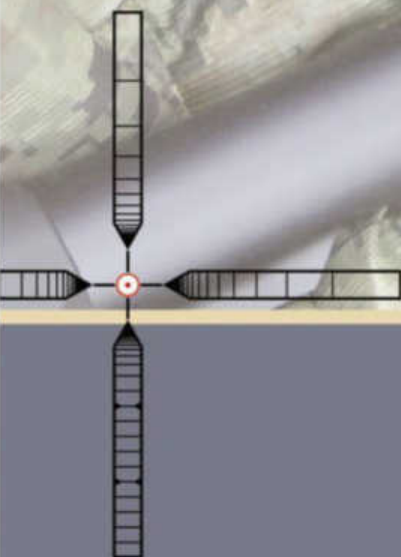
Our local hunting associations do good work in training and educating newcomers young and old, and the status of Dedicated Hunter implies that the holder has proven knowledge and practical ability in the important aspects of the sport.

Even so, my general observations in the hunting field make me think that our modern environment is distancing each generation more and more from the natural world. Today, those aspiring to be hunters seem to start out less knowledgeable, less understanding of what it is actually all about, less easily adaptable to what is required. Many seem to view hunting or wingshooting as some sort of status symbol. Others appear to view it as a sport to be learned and succeeded at. Fewer seem to perceive it as a facet of experiencing the wonder of the wilds. Perhaps in this respect we need to prepare young and upcoming hunters better. Possibly then we could get the world to perceive hunters in a better light. ■

We at Magnum wish our readers all good things for the Festive Season and the New Year.



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Thakathi Hippo?

by TONY MARSH



Croc on a rock (at the centre of the pic between the stands of bullrushes). We could see seven others from our boat. This was at the mouth of the channel where the hippo was shot.

IT'S HARD TO believe that in this year of grace, 2015, there are still people who believe in witchcraft, and there are even tribal courts that deal with this sort of thing. And therein lies a tale.

Impalila Island is as far east as one can go on the Caprivi Strip of Namibia. It lies at the confluence of the Zambezi and Chobe rivers, which respectively border it with Zambia to the north-east and Botswana to the south (the town of Kasane lies due south of it). The Kasai channel, running roughly north-south between these two rivers, separates Impalila from the rest of the Caprivi. During the rainy season, large segments of Impalila are under water. Here, due to the abundant water and the resulting lush growth, there is

intense competition between the scattered human communities with their large cattle herds, and the wildlife – mostly elephant, hippo and crocs.

PRIOR TO OUR hippo hunt, I had enjoyed a brief, intense and successful hunt for elephant – termed a “community management hunt”. Now it was the turn of my safari companion, Peter Tenki, to do the hunting. For reasons known only to themselves, the powers that control the hunting quotas in the conservancy had denied Peter the second elephant licence our PH, Tobie Engelbrecht, had been issued on quota, so Peter had opted for a hippo hunt instead, with the stipulation that it had to be hunted on land and not sniped in the water.

Early on the morning of day one, we located an enormous bull grazing on the lush growth on a broad swale separated from the Zambezi by a band of reeds some 150 yards wide. There were cattle all around, keeping a respectful distance from this old warrior. We managed to stalk up close to this bull, but could not see his tusks. While we debated whether it was reasonable to assume the tusks of such a bull would be commensurate with his size and age, he sensed the unease of the surrounding cattle and their attendant egrets, and made a beeline for the reeds and was gone.

There was hippo sign everywhere, some of it very fresh. On our second morning we heard the unmistakable sonorous, resonating grunts of a bull



Hippo where he was shot in twelve inches of water. Peter Tenki (left) with author.

through the reeds down to the river. We heard two enormous splashes and then the familiar grunting of the victor – now far away and safe from our ambush point. The tension and anticipation of the wait, followed by the raw excitement of the invisible battle, more than made up for our disappointment.

We boated down the Kasai channel, scouting for hippo. We saw plenty, but all in the water. It was the dry season and the water was low. There may well have been many out on dry land, but the high banks and the reeds prevented our seeing anything but crocodiles. We realised our chances of engaging a bull on land were slim.



Tip of Impalila – Zambezi on left, Chobe on right.

IN THE AFTERNOON of day three our luck changed. When we docked, a game scout who lives on Impalila was waiting for us, bristling with excitement. It seems almost everyone on the island has a cellphone, and he had received word from a nearby village that a large bull hippo was feeding in a huge swampy area not far off.

On our arrival, we spotted the big old bull about a quarter of a mile out in the swamp, feeding on the lush vegetation in very shallow water. A group of locals had already gathered on the shore, silently watching us plan our stalk. The swamp formed a shallow bowl about a mile across, filled with reeds, grassy banks and water of varying depth, and the bull was feeding beyond two distinct channels. The wind direction forced us to take a semi-circular approach to our right, which

hippo in the reeds and his deliberate wading sounds as he approached the 30 yard width of open marshy shallows that separated our hiding place from the reeds. As he drew nearer, the tops of the reeds moved in tandem with his plodding through the shallow water. Occasionally we heard the furious swishing of his tail as he defecated, scattering his dung as hippos do. Then the tempo seemed to increase and we became conscious of other movements in the reeds, and strained our ears to interpret the sounds.

All of a sudden the grunting changed to roars of rage and all hell seemed to break loose behind the intervening screen. We heard foliage being ripped and a great thrashing in the water, accompanied by continuous rage-fuelled bellowing. Clearly, two hippo bulls were fighting behind the screen of reeds. The battle was brief and the dominant bull chased his rival crashing

The hippo hide was as thick as two of my fingers.





Above: Our transport to Impalila island. Our accommodation was upstream on the Chobe on the Namibian side.

meant crossing the two deep channels. Our scout indicated a *mokoro* on the shore and the owner assured us it was 'sound'. The party would consist of Peter, Tobie, the assistant PH Emile and the scout. Being the heaviest, I was left behind. The dugout canoe made less than ten yards before it filled with water and sank. I tried not to laugh.

Plan B was obvious. Wade! I had a grandstand view. They successfully, albeit slowly, negotiated the waist-deep channels. Using a small outcrop of bush as cover, step by watery step the closely-bunched group approached the oblivious hippo. Watching through my binoculars I suddenly realized I was one of some thirty onlookers and, depending on how events unfolded, we might be in

the line of fire. Hastily I ushered them to one side, out of danger.

WATCHING THE proceedings through my binos was nerve racking – I expected the hippo to sense their presence any moment. Peter advanced slightly ahead of the group, his .375 loaded with Hornady 300gr solids. His first shot went straight into the heart-lung area. The bull promptly wheeled and ran at a slight going-away angle, but largely broadside to the hunters. This could be the 'death dash' of a mortally wounded animal – or not. An otherwise-wounded hippo either charges or makes for the nearest deep water, which could prove problematic. Accordingly, Peter's shot was rapidly followed by two back-up

shots from Tobie's Krieghoff double and three from Emile's .458. All but one of these solids fully penetrated, as had Peter's initial shot.

THIS BARRAGE was a wise move – the hunters were standing in waist deep water with awkward and unsure footing. Had the hippo elected to charge, he would have been on them very quickly. The bull ran about forty yards towards the spot where the local onlookers and I had previously been standing. He was a good 300 yards away, but given what followed, I'm glad we moved. Peter fired another shot which hit high in the neck; the bull almost somersaulted as it crashed to the ground, stone dead.

WITHOUT GIVING thought to what might be in the water – namely bilharzia parasites and leeches, never mind crocs – and knowing they'd all left their cameras behind, I waded out directly towards the hunters, holding my camera up high. I soon had water up to my waist and deepening with every step. I was wondering what to do next, when a *mokoro* appeared seemingly out of nowhere and I was invited to climb aboard.

"He got the hippo," I announced conversationally to the poler. "A hippo and two cows," replied the poler grimly. Peter's last shot had whistled through the hippo's neck, deflecting about thirty degrees to the right. Two hundred yards further on it had hit a domestic

Left: This is the village (in the early evening) where one of the cows came from. Right: Kraal at village with cattle.



Impalila island at sunset.



cow between the eyes – one of a group feeding on a grassy rise in the shallows close to the shore – and had gone on to wound a second cow. Bad. Very bad.

We took photos – it had been a classic stalk and the bull was a grand old warrior covered in battle scars. As with the elephant I had shot on this trip, this hippo's hide was covered with small pimples, each one containing a flattened SSG pellet. Our hunt was now over. Negotiations for recompense for the cows were about to begin and would be lengthy.

We agreed to pay the owners a fair price. It took two days of negotiations involving Tobie, the game scout, the conservation manager, the police and the owners of the cattle, to resolve the

matter. The owners were from two families that were at odds with each other, over, of all things, witchcraft!

THERE WAS TO BE a hearing on the matter in the tribal court the week following the hippo incident. One family claimed that the other had engaged a witchdoctor to cast a spell on one of their young men, causing him to fall out of a *mokoro* and drown. And this in a land where nearly everyone has a cellphone! I can only speculate as to how this hearing might have developed had that stray bullet hit only the cow belonging to the plaintiff. Doubtless this would have been seen as further proof of witchcraft.

The power and penetration of the .375H&H commands respect, as does

the need for gun safety at all times. This astonishing fluke could have ended much more tragically.

On the flight up to Katima Mulilo, I had struck up a conversation with a PH. He said, "Speaking personally, as a PH, when it comes to hunting anywhere near the Chobe and Kasane, it's a case of too many people and too many cattle having ruined an otherwise great hunting area. Particularly close to the rivers. Stay back from the rivers."

BUT THE RIVERS are where the hippo are found. And in Africa, proximity to water dictates the extent of pastoral human settlement. Far from water there will be few if any people or cattle – but also no hippo. In hindsight our quest to hunt a hippo on land was risky. Fortunately, where I shot my elephant, way back in the thickets, this was not a factor. Impalila still has good elephant hunting. 📌

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Bangs and a Boom

As an avid sport-shooter (SA Defensive Pistol and SA Practical Shooting Association) I reload all my ammunition, including those for daily carry. This includes 9mmP, .40S&W, .38Sp, .357 Magnum, .45ACP, and 5.56x45 and .303 for my rifles. I also reload for my shotgun.

I read the article "Many Bangs and a Boom" by Leslie van der Merwe (*Magnum* September 2015) with interest as my carry handgun is a Glock 23 in .40S&W fed with 155gr Speer Gold Dot bullets and MP200 powder. I also use a Glock 35 in .40S&W with 180gr plated bullets and MP200 powder for my sport shooting, and have used lead bullets extensively in all my Glocks without any issues. For reliable feeding in my pistols (especially the Glocks in .40S&W) I now run all my cartridges though a Lee Carbide Factory Crimp die after seating the bullets. This post-sizing step resulted in a definite improvement in reliability.

I had to replace the barrels of my Glock 23 and Glock 35 pistols due to squib loads not being picked up in time. Interestingly enough with all these loads the guns cycled; despite the powder charge being low it was enough to work the action.

Having to make power-factor for SAPSA sport shooting in a Glock 23 meant that my reloads were always upper-end charges. The power factor is

calculated by multiplying mass in grain with the velocity in fps and dividing this by 1000. To make factor of 175 requires a velocity in excess of 972fps – the current Rheinmetal Denel Somchem Ballistic Data manual has 955fps as the maximum velocity for a 180gr Speer Plated HP bullet. This need for top-end loads to make factor is the reason I purchased the longer-barrelled Glock 35 in .40S&W for sport shooting.

I also do not understand why the bulk of commercial ammunition for the .40S&W is in 180gr, which I consider too heavy for the platform. I think even 165gr bullets are too heavy and that a bullet in the 150gr weight-class with a healthy velocity delivers the best performance for self-defence. I prefer a 155gr bullet for carry – my fairly stiff charges of MP200 tested in my Glock 23 do not show excessive pressure signs. – **Steve Elder, Gauteng**

Hunting in Africa

The debate about the harvesting of the famous Hwangwe National Park lion, Cecil, has brought into focus a number of key issues relating to the future of wildlife on this continent.

In my opinion the killing was a loss both genetically and financially. More significant, however, was the massive international public outcry and the disproportionate reaction – most vocal have been the Americans, unsurprisingly, since it was an American client who shot the lion.

We must accept that in this day and age there is a build-up of pressure against sport-hunting; therefore it is imperative that every hunter sets high ethical standards. The headline-catching aspects of the Cecil story deflect from the bigger picture. Unfortunately, as in all such cases where emotion overrides logic, the situation can get out of hand. The response to the death of one lion is a case in point. Does the same audience appreciate that Africa is losing an elephant every fifteen minutes, or

that it is estimated that a million tonnes of bush meat is being harvested illegally every year from the Congo basin – how many primates, duiker, forest sitatunga and bongo does that represent?

Hunting plays a crucial role in the future of Africa's wildlife. For example, Kenya has lost 60% of its wildlife since they banned hunting in 1977. In South Africa the game industry and hunting are vital; the revenue generated, jobs created, the sensible use of marginal land and the conservation of wildlife are all arguments in favour of its continued flourishing. However, in some cases higher ethical standards have to be demonstrated and ultimately there must be a clear and obvious connection with conservation.

A good starting point would be to gradually convince the public that hunters are not monsters, and that there are far greater concerns and challenges out there which urgently need to be addressed. – **Fergus Flynn, Zambia**

9x57 Mauser

I was pleased to read the article "Wildebess and the 9x57" (October 2015 edition) as it brought back happy memories. For many years my neighbour, Brenand Hall invited me to his game-ranch *Flockfield*, in the Sabi Sand Wildtuin. A 9x57 was the camp's standard rifle and with it Brenand shot several lions, though when I hunted lions with him he used his Vickers .404 and his daughter, Susan, used the 9mm Mauser. I remember the cartridges were Kynoch and came in packets of 100 rounds. It was an ideal cartridge for Lowveld hunting conditions. For some of the old pioneers of the Sabi Sand, the main reason for having a game farm was to hunt lions. Now it's all game lodges and has lost that hunting camp atmosphere; I believe there is no hunting in the Sabi Sand whatever. The likes of Brenand Hall and Wac Campbell must be spinning in their graves!

– **Rupert McNaught-Davis, Western Cape** 

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Hungry Hunter

by **LESLIE VAN DER MERWE**



Steaks cooked on a potjie lid about to be flambéd.

A WINTER'S morning, with Venus high in the sky, the moon long gone and the sun still an hour away, we wait alongside the dirt road for all the hunters to arrive, discussing the cold and whether the ducks will fly. It seems only moments before someone asks, "Coffee and rusks, anyone?"

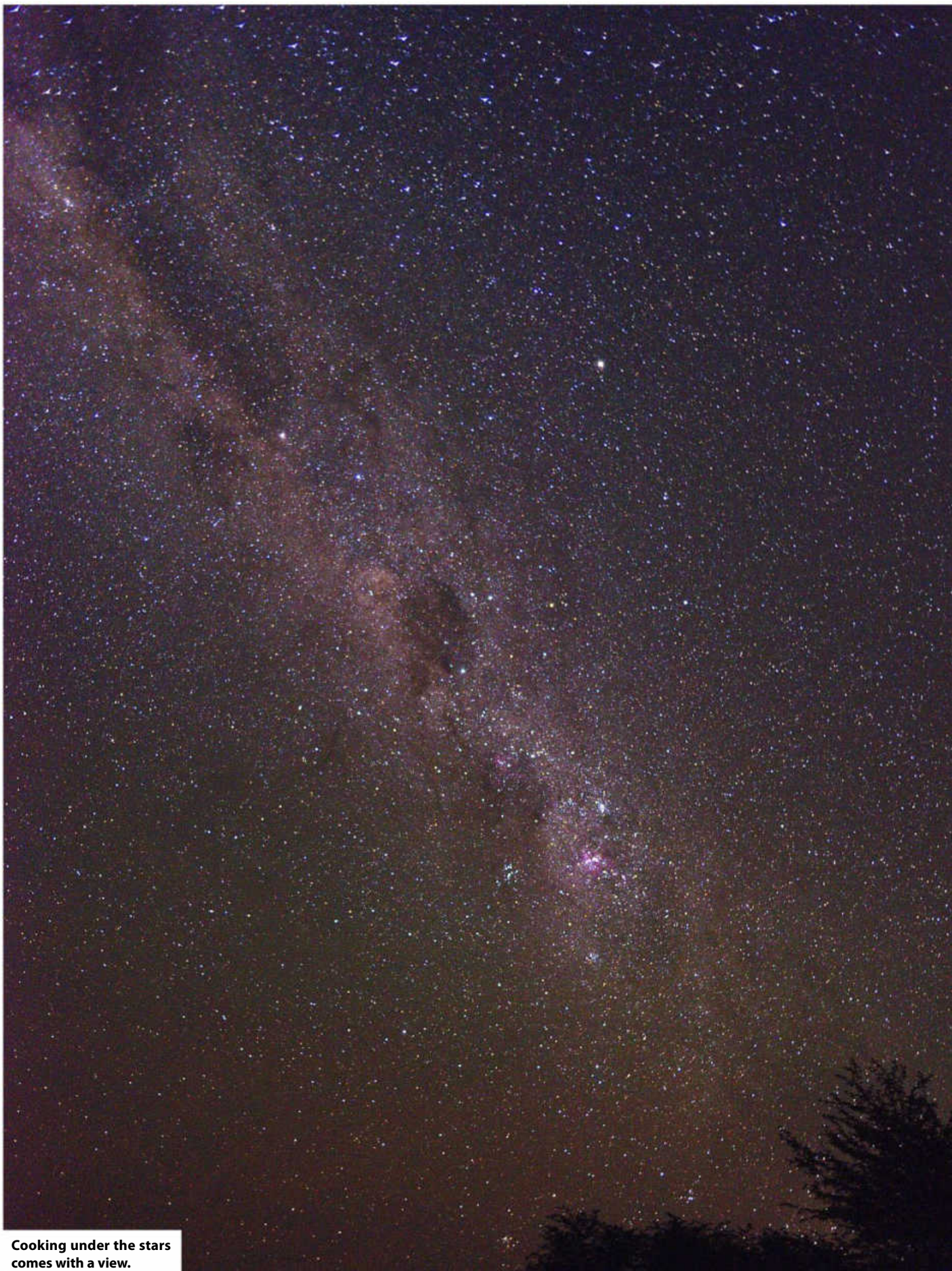
On other mornings, after the first long walk, and with a brace of birds in the bag we return to the vehicles. Again, someone opens a flask and offers to share their coffee and rusks. The older hunters with tired legs sit on the tailgate of a bakkie, alternately sipping and dunking, enjoying the short break. Tales are told of who shot what,

of which dog pointed and retrieved, the storyteller pausing only to take a bite of a rusk, softened by dipping it into a mug of warm coffee. For hunters, this serves as breakfast, brunch or anything in between. I often wonder if supermarket sales of rusks peak on a Friday, in anticipation of the weekend.

LATER IN THE day, something more substantial is called for. Of course, boiled eggs, leftover steak, sandwiches and biltong are staple snacks for hunters, but such fare does not lend itself as well to the social aspect as standing around a fire or a *skottel* braai. It seems we cannot resist a boerewors

roll with a squeeze or two of tomato sauce and an equal amount of mustard, and perhaps some caramelized onions. This is the male equivalent of comfort food. It's a quick meal when fried over gas, and always welcome. Some hunters will take the opportunity to mention that the *wors* contains kudu, or whatever else he hunted, and this gives him the opportunity to tell the story of the hunt to an almost captive audience

We enjoy our comfort food wherever we find it. I was in London some years ago, and lucky enough to attend the Sevens Rugby tournament at Twickenham. Close to the entrance was a food truck offering *boerewors*



Cooking under the stars
comes with a view.

More Camp-Cooking

SPRINGBUCK LIVER is of the very finest, but, like all liver, it is best when at its freshest. When I lived in South West Africa, I hunted most of my springbuck with a farmer friend, Walter Kirsten, who loves fresh liver as much as I, and often, once we had shot the first one or two springbuck, we'd head straight for the river bed where we built a *kameeldoring* fire and ate the livers on the spot. My kids were appalled, and still tease me about eating "...quivering liver that wasn't even dead yet". But the fresher the better, I say – and remember, liver does not freeze well.

Incidentally, if you have never braaied on a *kameeldoring* (camel-thorn) fire, you don't know what you're missing. This wood imparts a subtle but unique flavour to the meat which no other wood can equal – and being very hard, it makes wonderfully long-lasting coals.

Anyhow, remove the liver from the carcass, being very careful not to rupture the gall bladder – a tiny sac of fluid attached to the liver – if the contents of this drips onto the liver (or any other meat) you can throw it all away. The gall bladder must be removed by slicing away a layer of liver beneath it, just thick enough to ensure that the sac is not severed or ruptured.

Liver should not be braaied on the coals as this makes it too dry. You can alleviate the dryness by taking a bite of *vetderm* (colon, which is extremely fatty) with each bite of liver, but not everyone likes to eat *vetderm*, especially once they've seen what has to be squeezed out of it before starting. Slicing the liver thinly and frying it in oil or fat is fine, but still not the best. In my opinion, there is really only one way to cook fresh springbuck liver. Keep the entire liver intact, and impale it on a green stick (or metal fork). Now, build up the fire and hold the liver in the *flames*. It will swell up like a ball and then form a crust of charred meat. Discard the burnt crust and tuck into the tenderest, most succulent, and tastiest liver that you have ever eaten. It doesn't take very long to cook – rather take it off too soon, as you can always put it back – but you'll quickly learn how to get it cooked through, while still remaining juicy and succulent. Believe me – try it, and you'll never do it any other way again.

Another way of doing the liver, if you like *vetderm*, is to make a *pofadder*, which is a sort of boere haggis. Dice up the liver into small chunks (also the kidneys if you like – remove the outer skins and cut out any white or yellowish tissue from the insides, then wash them with vinegar). Dice some onions, mix it all together, add salt, pepper and spices, garlic, whatever takes your fancy. Now clean out the *vetderm* and wash it out with water. Tie one end closed with string, stuff the *vetderm* with the meat and onion mixture (it stretches to a large diameter) until... well, until it looks like a fat puff-adder. Tie the other end closed, and braai it slowly over low coals. Slice and eat.

Another way of doing liver as an hors d'oeuvre is in the form of *skilpadtjies*. For this you need *pensvet*, which is a very thin membrane of fat found in the abdomen. You cut small, flat slices of liver, just a bit bigger and thicker than the new R5 coin, salt and spice them, and wrap these in an envelope of *pensvet*. Braai very briefly over the coals – don't overdo it. *Extracted from Magnum, October 2007*

rolls. A small voice inside me said no, but I bought one anyway. The *wors* was not bad; it was however, less than half the length of the bread roll, and cost the equivalent of two kilos of my local butcher's finest. But it still tasted great, and as with many Christmas and birthday gifts, perhaps it was the thought that counted.

BIRD SHOOTING usually involves a lengthy break at lunchtime, and meals can be more than just a quick braai. Stir-fried guineafowl breasts, served in pita bread with a bit of tomato and lettuce or perhaps even duck breasts rolled in bacon and braaied, all taste excellent around a fire. Of course someone will bring a roll of *boere-wors*, and it might be shared among the hunters, with some saved for the journey home.

When hunting antelope, lunches are usually rushed, and there never seems to be enough time for anything other than some left-over meat and a salad, or a quick scrambled eggs with a couple of slices of bacon. Occasionally we're able to clean an oryx or springbuck liver, and fry it together with onions and lots of black pepper. A couple of drops of hot chilli sauce complete the meal.

DINNERS ARE DIFFERENT. Arriving in camp after dark, we find that hours of hard walking have taken their toll. It makes sense to serve an uncomplicated, quickly prepared, yet substantial meal. While my son Matt gets the fire going, I peel an onion or two, slice a knob of ginger and a clove of garlic. This gets fried in olive oil, and when the onions are browned, a tin of beans, peas or even just a can of tomatoes is added. That clears the conscience in terms of vegetables and vitamins. Some nights it might be pasta, served simply with olive oil and finely chopped garlic. Of course this is always accompanied by red meat that must be cooked over a fire.

A happy accident occurred this year. I forgot to pack the braai grid on our annual trip to Namibia. We improvised by inverting the *potjie* lid, balancing it

Early morning coffee and rusks.



on a stand over red-hot camelthorn coals. Matt poured some olive oil into the lid, and the magic began. The sound of sizzling steaks heightened the appetite. He poured a capful of rum over the meat, and lit it. The flambé was a bit of showmanship, but it did look good, and tasted even better.

AS THE HUNT NEARS its end, and the cool-room is resplendent with the week's harvest, there is more time to enjoy the evening campfire and meal. Provitas smeared with cottage cheese and topped with a couple of smoked mussels, serve as starters. Springbuck backstrap, browned in butter with

The beginning of a boerewors roll, the ultimate comfort food.



onions, and cooked slowly with a slug or two of red wine, provides the main attraction. Freshly baked pot bread, still warm, topped with a thick slice of butter, sops up the last of the sauce in the plate. Canned peaches drizzled with custard is offered for those with a sweet tooth.

Later, once the fire has burned down and the embers glow softly, I lay a spade-full of coals under my chair to chase away the evening chill. With a glass of something cheering in my hand, I lean back in my chair and look at the star-filled sky. In the distance a jackal calls. I am content. 



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Dassie Ramblings

by TIM MURRAY



Prime dassie habitat showing klipsweet.

THE BEST BIRTHDAY gift a farm boy could get was a small, heavy box! For a youngster growing up on a Karoo farm this would mean 50 rounds of .22 ammunition, or at least a new pocket knife.

During the 1970s, most farm kids spent a lot of their time hunting birds and small mammals, as other forms of entertainment were less available than today. We spent our holidays and free time protecting the orchard from mousebirds and starlings. We started with a catty or air-rifle, but as our experience and adventure-lust grew, the 'bigger game' beyond the immedi-

ate farmyard called for the use of a .22.

Ammunition always seemed in short supply, so a birthday or Christmas was really something to look forward to. The .22 ammunition I remember included those types in the accompanying photo. Some were high-velocity, others hollow-points, some were nickel and others brass, but all were "dangerous at 1 mile". The ones with a leaping antelope were our favourites and we imagined shooting springbuck with them!

OUR FAVOURITE holiday pastime was dassie hunting. The dassie, or rock hyrax (*Procavia capensis*) occurs in

most of sub-Saharan Africa. There are three subspecies in South Africa, the Cape rock hyrax being the common dassie of the Karoo. They live among the rocks on koppies, in river valleys and in erosion dongas, agave plantations, old buildings and stone walls.

The white mark on the rocks is locally called *klipsweet* – the correct name is hyraceum – which is dried dassie urine at latrine sites. Some of these dried urine layers are centimetres thick from many thousands of years of additions. Hyraceum has been used in the past to treat various ailments, particularly epilepsy. An internet search shows

interesting current scientific findings as well as various hyraceum derived products for sale.

In the 1970s/80s, dassies were numerous on our farm. Black-backed jackal had been eradicated in the sheep-farming areas and although there were black eagles (Verreaux's eagle) and lynx, the dassies had a field day. I grew up hunting dassies, as did my father and grandfather. Dassies were considered vermin – there was a bounty on their heads. There were government schemes that subsidised "hunt clubs" and vermin control activities. We were told that seven dassies ate enough food to feed one merino sheep. Consequently, seven salted dassie skins earned a boy one box of 50 .22 cartridges!

MY MOM ONCE cooked up some dassie meat as 'jugged hare' but I am sure it was never tried more than once in our house. We hunted them at every oppor-



Dassie standing sentinel.

tunity, providing the farm labour with extra protein and collecting skins for bounty or for a kaross we all dreamed of making. It was said that a decent kaross required about 400 tanned skins, and winter skins were the best.

The rifles we used included an Oberndorf Mauser, a Brno and a single-shot Browning. Scope sights were rel-

atively new additions to the rifles, still evoking a misplaced sense of guilt – notice in the photo, we turned the Brno's scope away from the camera, while proudly displaying the Browning side-on to show its iron sights.

We often used dogs for dassie control, our favourites included fox-terriers and Jack Russels, though some



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Left: A young author and neighbour, Gavin Holmes, with their bounty around 1974.

Right: Author accepting a culled dassie from Springer spaniel Dora.

springer spaniels took to the art of dassie retrieving.

Very occasionally, perhaps once in a family generation, the dassies on the farm had been known to simply disappear – seemingly overnight. I remember my grandfather telling me that, around 1980, the dassies were killed off by “a cat flu”. Around 2003, the dassies in the Graaff Reinet district started disappearing, and by 2008 were hard to find, and certainly not in huntable numbers. I am pretty certain that, from around 2009, there were none left on our farm. In the Cedarburg district, nearly 800km away, a research project was initiated by the Cape Leopard Trust to determine why the dassies were disappearing. It was established that a

certain strain of TB, prevalent in dassies only, was the cause. Dassie bacillus (*Mycobacterium tuberculosis complex sp.*) was the ‘cat flu’ my grandfather spoke about.

KIDS IN MY DAY were told that if you caught a dassie by its tail, its eyes would pop out on stalks. Of course, a dassie has no tail. But they are remarkable creatures that can look directly at the sun and run up vertical rock faces. They gestate for seven months and their closest living relatives are the dugong, the manatee and the modern elephant.

For the first time in South African hunting history, dassies were protected by a hunting season in 2012. The 2015 season in our area ran from 1 April to



The .22 ammo the author remembers.

30 September, with a bag limit of five. This is presumably aimed at protecting the dassie populations from over-hunting. Bear in mind that the hunting seasons and regulations vary from province to province.

In 2013, I saw dassies on our farm again for the first time in years; by 2015 there were many more. What a joy; they must have beaten the ‘cat flu’ and their numbers seem to be on the up. Hopefully they will again fulfil their traditional role in the lives and education of young hunters on our farm in the future. **M**

KLIPSWEET is used in the production of a number of products, one being perfume. One company states that hyraceum is an aromatic raw material that is a fairly sterile, stone-hard substance that also contains pheromones, which are odoriferous substances. The urine of hyrax is a jelly-like substance, and these little creatures always use the same place to urinate, which makes harvesting easier.

In olfactory terms, the hyraceum emits a deep, sensual and animalistic scent, a combination of musk, civet, castoreum, tobacco and agarwood. Due to its characteristic structure, this material is also known as Africa Stone. Earthy, rich and resinous, the hyraceum raw material is powdered and fused with pure organic non-denatured alcohol to produce perfume. – **Editor**

Recent photo of dassies reappearing on our farm.



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12ga.	Ata SP 1	R15 350
12ga.	Ata Trap Adj. Stock	R23 185
12ga.	Ata Engraved	R24 150
12ga.	Ata Camo max	R17 420
12ga.	Izarms	R 9 750
20ga.	Izarms	R10 750
12ga.	Webley & Scott	R16 950
12ga.	Beretta Silver Pigeon 1	R28 500
12ga.	Mauser	R19 750
12ga.	Miroku Mk 30	R25 000
12ga.	Miroku	R13 950
12ga.	Fabarm Elos	R18 995
12ga.	Rizzini "Albion"	R23 925
12ga.	Winchester "Energy"	R34 700
12ga.	Fausti "Conrad"	R22 560
20ga.	Fausti	R23 950
28ga.	Fausti Round-action	R49 990

SHOTGUNS: SEMI-AUTO - NEW

12ga.	Benelli M2 tactical	R28 625
12ga.	Benelli M3 tactical	R25 100
12ga.	Benelli M4 tactical	R31 610
12ga.	Benelli Vinci	R24 910
12ga.	Benelli Montefeltro	R29 420
12ga.	Benelli Rafaelo	R33 500
12 & 20ga.	Benelli Ultra-light	R31 835
20ga.	Benelli Comfortec	R31 390
12ga.	Ata Camo	R11 200
12ga.	Franchi Affinity	R16 135
12ga.	Izarms Impactor	R 5 950

SHOTGUNS: OVER/UNDER - USED

12ga.	Winchester	R13 500
12ga.	Browning	R14 500
12ga.	Mauser "Gold"	R19 500
12ga.	Sarasqueta	R 9 500
12ga.	Sabatti	R 9 500
12ga.	Bernadelli	R 9 750

SHOTGUNS: SIDE-BY-SIDE - USED

410ga.	Zabala	R 3 750
12ga.	Dumoulin	R 9 750
12ga.	BSA	R 4 750
12ga.	Wilkes	R 4 750
12ga.	W.Powell	R 4 500
12ga.	Spanish	R 3 950
12ga.	C.W. Andrews	R 4 500

SHOTGUNS: PUMP-ACTION - NEW

12ga.	Benelli SuperNova	R15 500
12ga.	Izarms	R 4 950
12ga.	Etr	R 4 950
12ga.	Izarms	R 5 700
12ga.	Browning	R 4 950

SHOTGUNS: PUMP-ACTION - USED

12ga.	Smith & Wesson	R 3 450
12ga.	Winchester	R 3 950
12ga.	Mossberg	R 3 750
12ga.	Squibman	R 2 950
12ga.	CBC	R 3 250
12ga.	Browning	R 3 950
12ga.	Omega	R 2 950
12ga.	Beretta	R 4 500

HANDGUNS - NEW

22lr.	Chiappa 1911-22	R 6 075
7.62mm	Tokarev Norinco	R 3 250
9mmk	S&W Bodyguard w-laser	R 8 725
9mmk	S&W Bodyguard	R 7 840
9mmk	Ruger LCP pink	R 6 930
9mmk	Glock M42	R 8 600
9mmk	S&W M&P 9 Shield	R 9 995
9mmk	S&W M&P 9C	R 9 995
9mmk	S&W M&P 9	R12 315
9mmk	Glock 17	R 9 750
9mmk	Glock 19	R 8 500
9mmk	CZ P-07	R 9 169
9mmk	CZ P-09	TBA
9mmk	CZ 75 Compact	R11 265
9mmk	CZ 75 SP-01 Shadow	R16 450
9mmk	Grand Power K100	R 9 950
9mmk	Taurus PT-92	TBA
9mmk	Taurus PT24/7 G2C	R 9 520
9mmk	Beretta PX-4 Storm	R10 640
9mmk	Uberti 5" Cattleman	R 7 950
9mmk	Uberti 7.5" Cattleman	R 7 640
9mmk	Glock 23 Gen 4	R11 200
9mmk	Uberti 5.5" Cattleman	R 7 100
9mmk	Uberti 7.5" Cattleman	R 7 640
9mmk	Taurus PT 1911	R13 850
9mmk	Glock 21	R11 916
9mmk	Sig-Sauer P220	R 9 750
9mmk	S&W XVR 460	R25 500

HANDGUNS - USED

22lr.	Colt Frontier Scout	R 4 500
22lr.	Uberti single-action 5.5"	R 2 450
22lr.	Beretta M70	R 1 450
22mag.	Ruger Single-six	R 3 950
22mag.	NAA Black Widow	R 4 950
22mag.	NAA 1/18"	R 3 950

22mag.	Hi-Standard O/U Derringer	R 3 250
6.35mm	Walther TPH boxed	R 4 950
6.35mm	Beretta M950B	R 1 250
7.63mm	Broomhandle Mauser various	R7 500+
7.65mm	FEG R78	R 1 950
7.65mm	CZ M70	R 1 800
7.65mm	Wbley Mk4 service rev.	R 1 950
7.65mm	Taurus/Astra/Rossi 2" + 4"	Varied
7.65mm	Rohm M17 O/U Derringer	R 1 850
9mmk	Astra Mod. 4000 Falcon	R 2 650
9mmk	Lorcin Mod L380	R 1 950
9mmk	Bernadelli Mod.60	R 1 950
9mmk	Luger PA-63	R 2 750
9mmk	Star M30	R 3 950
9mmk	Walther P-38	R 3 495
9mmk	Luger P-08	R 7 500
9mmk	Taurus/Astra/Rossi	Varied
9mmk	Ruger Police service six	R 3 450
9mmk	Uberti single-action 7.5"	R 3 950
9mmk	Uberti single-action 6.5"	R 3 950
9mmk	Colt M1911A1	R 5 950

DOG TRAINING AIDS

Canicalm Anti-Bark	R 750
Canicom 200 First	R 2 050
Canicom 200m	R 1 950
Canicom 800m	R 3 680
Canicom 1 500m	R 3 680
Canicom Receivers	R 1 800
Training Dummies	R 100
Canibee Pro	R 900
Canibee Radio Pro	R 1 920
Navidog Collars	R11 975
Navidog Receivers	R 4 215
Stop Barking Dogs (new)	R 250

RIFLES - NEW

22lr.	CZ 455 Supermatch	R 8 040
22lr.	Marlin XT22	R 4 626
22mag	Webley & Scott M1500	R 4 235
22.410	Chiappa Badger	R 7 650
222rem	CZ 527	R15 100
223rem	Tikka T3 Super Varminter	R19 120
223rem	Predator maxi	R13 850
223rem	T/C Dimension	R12 950
223rem	T/C Dimension L/Hand	R12 950
220swift	Classic M98	R14 500
22-250	T/C Venture stainless	R13 500
22-250	T/C Predator maxi	R13 850
22-250	CZ 550	R18 950
22-250	Howa M1500	R11 980
243win	Howa M1500	R11 769
243win	Remington S/S	R17 950
243win	Marlin X7	R 7 950
243win	Tikka T3 Sporter	R21 920
243win	Tikka T3 Super Varminter	R29 240
25-06	T/C Venture	R12 750
260rem	Tikka T3 Sporter	R36 330
260rem	Tikka T3	R24 560
6.5x55mm	Sako 85M	R31 950
6.5x55mm	Howa M1500	R11 980
6.5x55mm	CZ 550	R20 950
270win	CZ 550	R13 630
270win	Remington M783	R12 500
270win	T/C Venture camo	R14 450
270win	T/C Icon	R18 880
270win	T/C Dimension L/Hand	R12 750
270win	T/C Dimension	R12 750
270win	Classic M98	R14 500
270win	Winchester M70 Classic	R17 670
270WSM	Winchester M70 Ultimate	R12 500
7mm-08	T/C Venture	R12 750
7x57mm	CZ 550	R18 380
7x64mm	CZ 550	R16 990
7x64mm	Sako 85M	R33 850
7mm RM	T/C Venture	R12 750
308win	Tikka T3 Sporter	R31 920
308win	Sako 85S	R27 450
308win	Howa wood	R11 750
308win	CZ 550 Laminated	R24 550
308win	CZ Predator	R14 620
308win	CZ 550	R15 850
308win	Marlin X7	R 7 995
308win	Marlin H/Barrel X7VH	R12 500

308win	Winchester Coyote	R16 950
308win	Remington 700AAC	R17 100
308win	Remington 783	R 9 800
308win	T/C Venture	R12 750
308win	T/C Pro-hunter camo	R19 500
308win	T/C Encore	R18 500
308win	T/C Predator maxi	R13 850
30-06	T/C Icon Weather	R18 960
30-06	T/C Venture	R12 750
30-06	T/C Dimension	R12 950
30-06	T/C Dimension L/Hand	R12 950
30-06	Steyr Classic Blue	R39 150
30-06	Weatherby Vanguard	R16 400
30-06	Sako M85	R30 275
30-06	Sauer M101	R35 000
30-06	Remington 700 wood	R13 500
30-06	Classic M98	R 9 500
30-06	Classic M98	R14 500
30-06	Tikka T3	R17 300
30-06	Howa M1500	R 9 900
30-06	Marlin X7	R 7 995
30-06	Winchester M70 Alaskan	R22 700
30-30win	Marlin lever-action	R13 500
30-30win	Rossi lever-action M336C	R 9 450
300H&H	Classic M98	R19 500
300wm	Tikka T3	R29 240
300wm	Tikka T3	R17 300
300wm	CZ 550	R17 095
300wm	Classic M98	R14 500
300WSM	Tikka T3	R18 890
8x57mm	Sako 85S	R22 940
8x57mm	CZ 550	R18 385
338win mag	T/C Venture	R13 850
357mag	Uberti lever-action M1873	R18 465
9.3x62mm	CZ 550	R17 470
375H&H	CZ 550 Lux	R21 110
375H&H	CZ 550 Lux Ebony	R22 500
375H&H	Winchester M70 Safari	R26 950
375H&H	Sako 85L	R23 950
416Rigby	CZ 550 mag	R23 990
44-40	Uberti lever-action M1866	R16 850
44mag	Rossi lever-action	R 9 450
45-70	Pedersoli Kodiak Double	R42 175
45-70	Marlin M1895GS S/steel.	R18 440
45-70	Rossi lever-action	R12 750
45-70	T/C Encore	R15 850
458win mag	Winchester M70 Safari	R28 340
458win mag	CZ 550 Mag	POR
458Lott	CZ 550 mag	R27 550

RIFLES - USED

22lr.	Brno	R 4 500
22lr.	Mauser Mn410b	R 5 500
22lr.	Remington	R 2 950
22lr.	Norinco lever-action	R 2 750
22lr.	Norinco JW15 silenced	R 2 950
22HP	Savage M99	R 2 950
22 Hornet	Anshutz	R 6 500
22hnt.	Zidi	R 8 950
22hnt.	Brno ZKW 465	R 8 950
22hnt	.410 CBC combination	TBA
223 rem	Sako	R14 500
223rem	Tikka	R 9 500
223rem	Ruger M-77 silenced	R 8 750
223rem	CZ 527-2 scoped	R14 950
243win	BSA Scoped	R 7 500
243win	Voere M98	R 9 500
243win	Tikka LSA-55	R 9 500
25-06	Ruger M77 scoped	R15 950
270win	Brno ZKK 600 scoped	R16 500
270win	Mauser M66	R11 500
270win	Sako M98	R13 750
270win	Mauser M98	R 9 500
270win	BSA	R 8 500
7mm RM	Sauer M90 scoped	R34 500
7mm RM	Sauer 200 scoped	R19 500
7 x 57	Mauser Synthetic Stock	R 9 500
7 x 57	Sako Deluxe & Scope	R16 500
7x57mm	Brno M21 rebarreled	R17 500
7x57mm	Brno M21	R 8 500
303	Musgrave & Scope	R 6 500
303Br.	Lee Enfield sporter	R 3 750
303Br.	BSA sporter	R 4 500
303Br.	SMLE No.1 Mk3	R 2 850
303 Br.	No.4 Mk2	R 2 850
308 win	Mauser 96 & Scope	R18 500
308win	Parker-Hale M98	R 9 500
308win	Voere M98	R 7 500
308win	Voere scoped	R 7 500
30-06	Brno ZKK 600	R11 500
30-06	Parker-Hale M98 scoped	R11 500
30-06	Sako L61R scoped	R18 500
30-06	Weatherby VGX scoped	R17 500
30-06	Musgrave M90 scoped	R12 500
30-06	Voere M98 scoped	R11 500
30-06	FN M98	R10 500
30-06	Ruger M77 silenced	R 8 500
30-30win	Winchester M94	R12 500
30-30win	Rossi Rio Grande	R 8 500
30-30win	Marlin lever-action	R 9 750
300 win	Ruger No 1 & Scope	R14 500
8x57mm	Mauser M98	R 6 950
8x60mm	Brno M21	R14 500
8x60mm	Oberndorf Mauser 98	R16 500
338win mag	Sabi mauser	R12 500

RIFLES - USED

9x56mm	Mannlicher M1906	R 9 750
9x57mm	Mauser M98	R 6 950
9.3x62mm	FN Mauser	R13 500
375exp.	Mannlicher M1910 f-stock	R12 500
375H&H	Double Rifle	P.O.R.
375H&H	Cogswell & Harrison M98	R 9 500
375H&H	Winchester M70	R13 500
375H&H	Interarms M98 scoped	R14 500
375H&H	Jeffery Magnum 98	R67 500
378Wea.	Brno 602 scoped	R16 950
416Rigby	CZ 550 mag scoped	R19 500
458mag	Ruger M77	R17 500

SEMI-AUTO RIFLES/ CARBINES - NEW

22lr.	Chiappa m4	R10 995
22lr.	GSF m4	R15 535
5.56mm	NEA	R22 540
5.56mm	Norinco CQ-A	R13 995
7.62x39mm	Norinco type 56 [AK]	R 7 250
308win	S & W MP10	R31 995
9mmk	SAR	R14 500

SEMI-AUTO RIFLES/ CARBINES - USED

5.56mm	Norinco AR15	R 9 750
223rem	Vektor CR21	R14 500
7.62x51mm	H&K G3	R 9 750
7.62x51mm	FN-Fal/R1	R7 500-R16 500
7.62x39mm	SKS Carbine	R 6 500
7.62x39mm	STG 58 folder	R11 995
30m1	Carbine	R 9 750
30-06	M1 Garand	R14 500
9mmk	Kommando	R 3 950
9mmk	Uzi HMC	R 6 500
9mmk	Cobra	R 4 500
9mmk	R76 HMC	R 4 500
9mmk	BXP	R 5 950
9mmk	Sterling	R 6 50

The Power of Pressure

by GREGOR WOODS



This Musgrave Lyttelton RSA in .270 Win apparently blew up when the use of a maximum load coincided with a change from Federal to PMP cases (the latter having thicker walls).

understands that published hand-loading data is designed to keep his loads within the officially specified (safe) pressure limits. It is only when you step outside of these limits, knowingly or unknowingly, that you risk damage to your firearm and injury to yourself.

WHEN FIREARMS 'blow up' it is always excessive chamber pressure (or the excessive speed at which the pressure peaks) that does the damage, irrespective of the cause. That said, the majority of gun 'blow-ups' have nothing to do with hand-loading. Barrel blockages are the major cause: sportsmen inadvertently dip the muzzle into the sand or mud, or accidentally leave a cleaning patch in the bore, or some other obstruction. Some years ago, *Magnum* published a photo of a rifle fired by someone who had omitted to remove the steel stud of a collimator (scope/bore alignment device) from its muzzle; the barrel split along all six rifling grooves, opening like the petals of a daisy – right back to the rear sight. Many a bulged barrel has been blamed on a hornet's mud nest, built into the muzzle as the piece stood in a corner.

It may also come as a surprise that comparatively few gun blow-ups are the result of delinquent hand-loaders trying to 'push the envelope' for more

CHAMBER PRESSURE is an essential part of the shooting equation – without it, no firearm would work. Powder combustion produces burning gasses which expand rapidly and violently, exerting pressure in all directions. Within the locked cartridge chamber, the least resistance to this pressure is offered by the bullet which is friction-held by the case-neck. The rapidly-increasing pressure forces the bullet out of the neck and down the barrel (the projectile fills the rifled bore, sealing off the gas behind it) until it exits the muzzle, at which point the pressure instantly drops. All this is normal, and these pressures are carefully controlled.

Chamber pressure is measured using very expensive equipment normally found only in arms and muni-

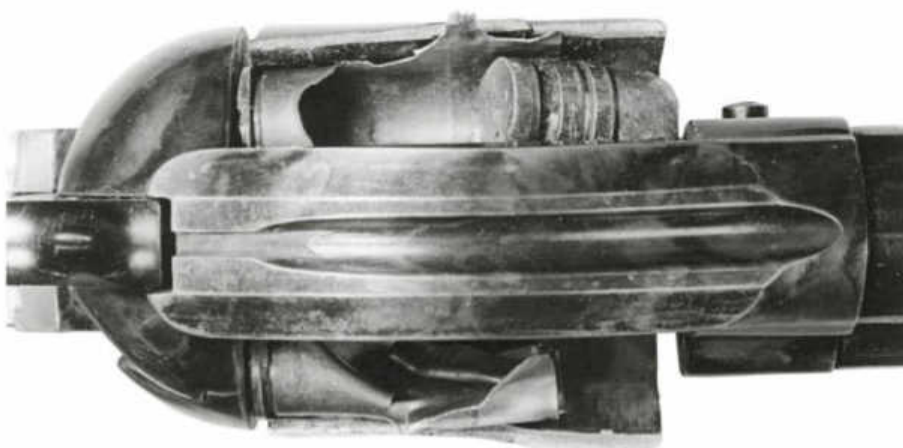
tions factories. Pressure measurement is usually expressed in terms of copper units of pressure (cup) or, more recently, pounds per square inch (psi) depending on the type of equipment used to measure it. Every factory-built firearm is designed to withstand the pressure generated by the standard factory-loaded cartridge for which it is chambered, plus a margin for safety.

IN MODERN centrefire rifles 50 000 to 55 000 psi is generally considered the upper limit for working chamber pressures. In handguns, the wide variations in design and characteristics have the maximum pressures ranging between about 12 000 and 40 000 psi. The average hand-loader need not bother unduly with these figures, as long as he



Magnum contributor Tony Marsh lost the thumb of his left hand when a reload blew up his Manton .360 No2 NE double rifle for reasons indeterminable.

A double-charged hand-load blew up this Uberti single-action revolver in .45 Colt. The Uberti's sturdy top-strap bowed but held, directing the blast laterally. Note the difference in the cases remaining in the adjacent chambers. Notice how the brass walls of the unfired cartridge were stretched and torn outwardly by its own explosion. As shrapnel from the central chamber first ripped open the adjacent chamber and the brass walls of the cartridge within it, flame must have instantly entered the break and ignited the powder, for the unfired cartridge exploded like a bomb. The spent case in the opposite chamber, however, was crushed inwardly, since there was no powder in it.



power. Most blow-ups unrelated to barrel blockages are caused by *simple carelessness*. In the case of revolvers, by double charging, which is easy to do in large-capacity cases like the .38 Special, .357 Mag, .44 Special

and .45 Long Colt (see Part 6). One such incident I witnessed involved the double-charging of a *moderate* load in a S&W .38 Special snubie – it was enough to bulge the chamber, preventing the cylinder from turning.

Another was more spectacular: a friend was chronographing fairly hot .45 Colt loads in his solid-frame, single-action Uberti (a very strong gun). The string went well until the double-charged round came under the hammer



Above: Three .270 bullets all weighing 130gr. L-r: Norma conventional jacketed lead-core; Nosler Partition; Rhino Solid Shank. The Nosler's partitioned jacket makes its bearing surface longer than the Norma's, while the Rhino's solid copper shank and thicker nose-jacket render its bearing surface even longer.

Below: Both these .308 bullets are lead-core designs weighing 180gr. Left: PMP standard-grade; right: Woodleigh Weld-Core. The Woodleigh has a thicker jacket, making it longer and increasing its bearing surface, which can raise pressures.



Above: All three of these .375 bullets weigh 300gr. L-r: Woodleigh Weld-Core; Swift A-Frame and Rhino Solid Shank. The thick, partitioned jacket of the Swift A-Frame gives it an even longer bearing surface than the Woodleigh's, while the Rhino Solid Shank's is longest of all.



Left: Both these .458 bullets weigh 400gr. The Woodleigh lead-core (left) has a shorter bearing than the Barnes-X, which is of all-copper construction. The Barnes-X's also offers greater resistance to the rifling lands, increasing pressures.

– then the top half of the cylinder blew off as the explosion simultaneously set off the adjacent round as well. I was seated on the shooter's left, slightly behind, recording the velocities. A segment of cylinder almost the size of a matchbox blew out the left side, passing mere inches from my head, struck a brick wall three metres away, ricocheted 15 metres in the opposite direction, struck a pile of crates and fell to the floor. Anyone standing due left of the shooter (as on a firing line) would very likely have been killed.

BLOW-UPS ALSO result from omitting to put powder in the case at all – again, *carelessness*. The primer discharge lodges the bullet in the bore and the following shot destroys the gun (see Part 6). Likewise: grabbing the wrong tin of – faster-burning – powder without double-checking the label; or the wrong box of (heavier) bullets. Or your eye might wander into the wrong data column in the table and register a load for a 150gr bullet when you're loading 180gr.

Be careful not to spill primers on your workbench; if you do, be sure to find every last one – count those remaining in the box. If one happens to fall unnoticed into a cartridge case which is then charged with a near-maximum load, the extra pressure could wreck the gun. For the same reason,

never leave an uncapped tin of powder on the bench, or your powder hopper uncapped. If you leave cases in a loading block, cover them with a sheet of cardboard.

The dangerous pressure 'spike' resulting from any one of the aforementioned possibilities, comes without warning, hence there is nothing you can do to prevent it – other than avoiding carelessness in the first place.

Even loads that don't exceed published maximums can generate excessive pressures. Various factors influence chamber pressure, and usually it is when two or more such factors occur *simultaneously* – in conjunction with a near-maximum load – that damage results.

For example, a given propellant can vary in burning rate from one lot to the next. Cartridge cases vary in capacity depending on the thickness of the brass (which differs from brand to brand); smaller combustion capacity means higher pressure levels.

Bullets of the *same calibre and weight* can vary in bearing-surface. A flat-based, round-nosed rifle bullet has a longer bearing-surface than a boat-tail spitzer of the same weight, and this creates more bore-friction, hence

higher pressures. A bullet with a partitioned jacket, such as Nosler or Swift A-Frame, has a longer bearing-surface than a conventional jacketed bullet of similar weight. In 1973, respected American gun-writer George C Nonte wrote, "Bullet construction alone can cause as much as 10,000 psi variation in the pressures produced by a standard full-charge .30-06 load." Note that his statement predated the even longer all-brass/copper 'monolithic' and 'X' type bullets of the 1980s which (all other factors being equal) were found to generate even greater bore-friction, hence higher pressures. The Rheinmetall Denel reloading manual for Somchem powders has a separate data division giving powder charges specifically for 'X' type all-copper bullets.

BULLETS SEATED *deeper* than others effectively reduce case capacity, causing pressures to peak sooner, which is potentially dangerous. Bullets of all-copper or brass construction, which are longer than lead-core designs of similar weight, must be seated deeper in the cases to achieve appropriate cartridge overall length (COL). However, being less malleable than lead-core designs, the solid metal construction of 'monolithic' and 'X' type bullets sets up greater resistance to the rifling lands, hence these latter designs must not be seated so far out as to touch the lands when chambered, as the resulting inertia causes pressures to peak too rapidly. Such bullets must be seated with

This Lee Enfield .303 blew to pieces due to an extremely corroded bore which increased friction, thus raising pressures.





This Sako .243 blew up when firing a reload. The owner could provide no explanation. It is unusual for a rifle receiver to disintegrate.

their bearing surface at least 2mm back from the lands (this initial 'freebore' movement of the bullet affords a more gradual rise in pressures). In many cases, the only way to achieve this while still retaining sufficient powder capacity, is to use a lighter-weight 'monolithic' or 'X' type bullet than you would a lead-core design. In the case of expanding bullets, the superior terminal weight-retention of these all-copper hollowpoints renders them sufficiently penetrative to compensate for the reduction in bullet weight.

And those are just *some* of the variations in cartridge components. Now consider the firearms. Barrels chambered for the *same* cartridge can differ slightly in bore and groove diameter, and their chambers can differ in size. Tighter bores and chambers mean reduced combustion chambers, which mean elevated pressures. Your barrel may have a tighter rifling twist, further raising pressure levels. This is why you should never *start* with a maximum load, whether you got it from a published reloading manual or from a friend, as it will have been developed in a different barrel. Now add to this the fact that bullets of the same nominal 'calibre' can also differ slightly in diameter.

ANOTHER FACTOR IS bore condition. A bore that is rough with tooling marks produces higher friction (hence pressure) than a well-finished and smoothly lapped bore. A badly pitted bore raises pressures significantly.

Ambient temperature (read 'powder temperature') influences chamber pressure. Maximum loads worked up in the winter months, and subsequently fired on a hot summer afternoon, especially if they have been lying in the open sun at the range or on a hunting vehicle's dashboard, will generate higher pressures. Dangerous-game loads employing heavily-compressed powder charges developed in cool north

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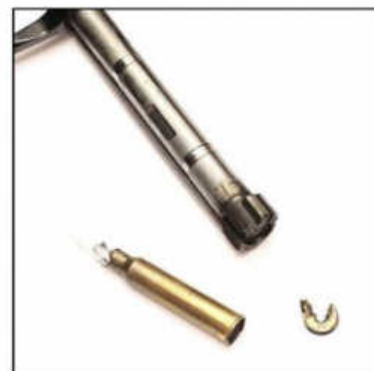
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• Verkykers

• Sniper



Another Sako (.300 Win Mag) which blew up through no fault of the rifle. It is thought that the reloader used either S321 or S335 instead of S365. Always double-check the labels!



American climates, and then used in the intense heat of the Africa's Zambezi Valley in October, have been known to jam bolt-actions so tightly they had to be hammered open.

Now, knowing that these many variations can raise pressures to some degree, modern manufacturers build their firearms robustly enough to withstand a margin of excessive pressure. None of these factors *on its own* is likely to damage a firearm if your load is within specs. A cautious hand-loader would soon notice one or more of the typical signs of excessive pressure and would stop firing until he'd attended to the cause or reduced the load.

ON THE RARE occasions when guns blow up with loads that are within published specs, the cause is usually a *coincidence* of any such factors in conjunction with a maximum or near-maximum load. Many shooters are ignorant of the factors which influence pressure. Such a shooter might switch from his heavy, conventional lead-core bullet to a 'monolithic' or 'X' type, having no knowledge of the aforementioned bullet-seating implications. He sees no reason to reduce his maximum load, since the bullet weights are the same. By coincidence, he needs to open a fresh tin of powder, and this new lot happens to be 3% faster burning than the previous lot.

That could well be enough to do it. If he's lucky, the outcome might be his

rifle stock split open at the magazine area, the magazine floorplate bulged and broken open, and a bolt that is jammed solid, later to reveal a broken extractor claw and damaged bolt head. If he is *not* lucky, his action's receiver will blow apart like a grenade and he could be looking down at the bloodied stump which seconds ago was his left hand that had been gripping the now-shattered fore-end. Of course, if he was not wearing protective shooting glasses at the time, he might not be seeing any of this at all – ever again. His friends may find his buckled scope and other fragments up to 30 yards away.

Now let's consider a real-life case. The photo of the blown-up Musgrave Lyttelton RSA rifle seen on page 22 appeared in the August 2010 edition of *Magnum*. It was a .270 for which the owner had worked up a hot load using S365 powder, a 130gr bullet and Federal cases. It proved accurate, but he wanted an even flatter trajectory, so he decided to increase the powder charge by one grain.

THAT WAS HIS first mistake. In rifle cartridges, one-grain increments are fine while the loads remain moderate, but when you approach a maximum load, you must go up in increments of half a grain or less, checking for pressure signs. Even so, he would probably have still been okay, since his load did not exceed Somchem's published maximum. But now, to illustrate my point,

this is where the *coincidence factor* kicked in. At this juncture, he just happened to switch from Federal cases to PMP cases. PMP cases have thicker walls than Federal, hence reduced combustion capacity. And that's all it took.

His first two shots should have told him he was dancing with demons. One primer was severely flattened and oozing powder residue around its perimeter; the second primer was missing and its pocket severely stretched (in Part 8 we'll discuss these warning signs and what they mean, but for now, read: 'heavily excessive pressure'). It seems the shooter did not notice these signs or didn't know what they indicated. His third shot resulted in what you see in the picture. While we can never be entirely certain of the possible factors that caused a blow-up, it would seem that the *coincidence* of his switch to thicker-walled cases with his one-grain powder increase at the top-end of the scale certainly played a role.

Don't let any of this scare you off. Gun blow-ups are rare and resulting injuries rarer still. In 40 years of rolling my own, I have fired thousands of hand-loads and never broken a gun. Countless thousands more are fired around the globe – what few mishaps occur could mostly be avoided with due care and diligence. But you do need to be aware of the principles and factors which influence pressure and know how to spot the warning signs. 



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ARRIVING SOON!

Colt's Pocket Pistol

by **ROBIN BARKES**



an entirely new six-shot revolver and the rarest of the Colt revolvers – the heavy .44 calibre Whitney Walker Colt. Colt eventually opened his own plant in Hartford, Connecticut, and began producing the Dragoon pistol there. With his usual stroke of genius, Colt soon

Left: At first glance the only difference between these two pocket Colts is the barrel length. But also note the different size trigger guards, one brass; the position of the stop notch on the cylinders; also the different size cutouts to receive the ball and compare the heights of the front sight.

Below: The .36 calibre Navy Colt above is the big brother to the .31 calibre pocket Colt below.

LATE FEBRUARY 1836 is a memorable period in American history. It marks the days when Mexican General Antonio de Santa Anna launched his attack on the Alamo, wiping out the garrison of Americans fighting for Texan Independence. At the same time (February 25) Samuel Colt was granted his first patent for a repeating pistol using a revolving cylinder. Production then began on the Paterson Colt (also known as the Texas Colt) that brought to an end the centuries-old reign of the muzzle-loading pistol. This initial venture ended when the factory in Paterson, New Jersey, closed down in 1842.

Samuel Colt then went into partnership with a manufacturer to build



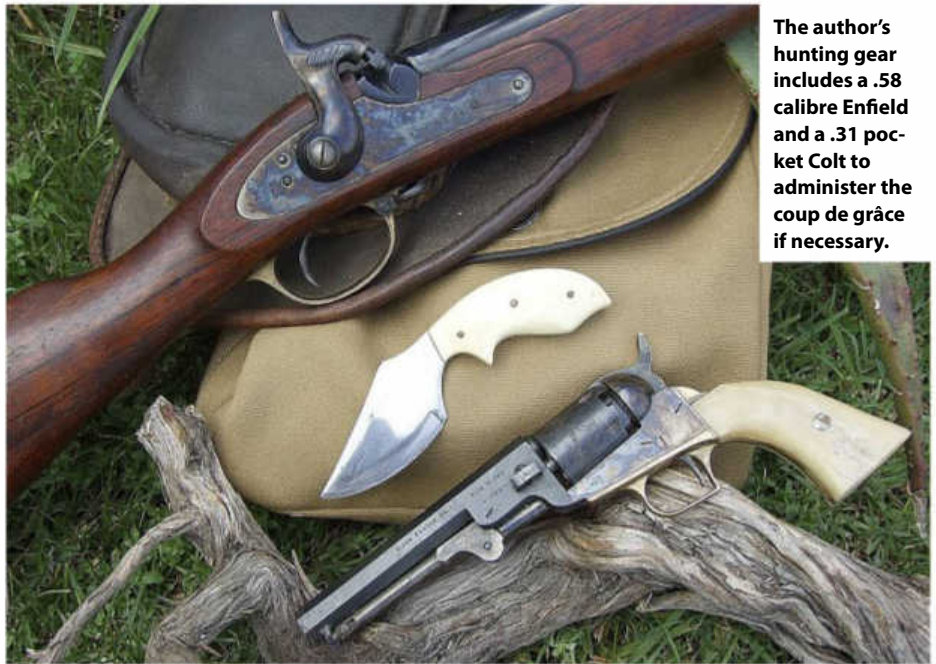
scaled this pistol down to produce the pocket size version known as the Baby Dragoon for civilian use. And it was this little revolver that really got the ball rolling – or should I say, the balls flying.

Realizing that he was onto a good thing he made various improvements to the Baby Dragoon and in 1849 produced his new .31 calibre Colt Pocket Pistol. This was so successful that the Pocket Pistol, with all its refinements, was immediately scaled up to become the .36 calibre Navy Colt – one of the most famous revolvers in the world.

HOWEVER, HERE is the interesting thing: in terms of sales, Colt's little 'Pocket Pistol' was more successful than any of his other revolvers. That's right – more Pocket Pistols were produced than any other Colt percussion handgun – a total of 336 000 including those made in his London plant. But for me, the great mystery is: who used them?

The pocket Colt was around in great numbers yet never seen, used or written about – a kind of ghost gun. Let me explain that statement. As a young boy I lapped up the paperback 'cowboy' books that in those days lined the shelves of bookshops and filled the stands of corner cafes. Likewise, I never missed the Saturday morning cowboy film or the B-grade westerns shown at the local cinemas. Gosh, back in the fifties, hardly a week went by when there wasn't an Audie Murphy or Randolph Scott Western showing. Yet, in all that time I don't recall ever seeing, or reading about, a Colt Pocket Pistol being used. Then one Christmas my father gave me James Horan's book *Pictorial History of the Wild West*.

WHILE GAZING AT all those old black-and-white photographs I realized that the men and stories of the American 'Wild West' were true; all those outlaws, gunfighters, bank robbers, rustlers and lawmen really did once live and were not fairy tales. So I gave up reading fictional novels and began collecting books on the real west, books researched and written by historians,



The author's hunting gear includes a .58 calibre Enfield and a .31 pocket Colt to administer the coup de grâce if necessary.

and I would sit, as I still do, and carefully scrutinize the grainy old photographs with a magnifying glass.

I have yet to discover a single photo out of the thousands I have examined, showing any one person holding a Colt Pocket Pistol. With photography newly invented, westerners loved having their pictures taken holding their guns, mostly big six-shooters, Winchester rifles and sometimes shotguns – but there's no trace of the thousands of Colt Pocket Pistols that were produced

between 1849 and 1873. Nor have I ever read any mention by name of a Colt Pocket Pistol being used. Yes, many a time a man in a fix was reported to have suddenly produced a small pistol from his pocket, but these could have been any of the many cheap hideout guns available, including derringers.

OF COURSE, in some cases, the 'backup gun' could have been a pocket Colt, but if so, it was never described as such. So who actually bought Samuel Colt's

This original pocket Colt case may look beat up but the gun, powder flask, bullet mould and caps are in excellent condition.





Left & above: The lid of this innocent looking traveller's chest folds back to provide a writing surface. The interior contains a deadly secret. Folding back the flaps covering the interior reveals a Colt Pocket Pistol, powder flask and tin of percussion caps.

best-selling revolver? When you come to think of it, that pea-sized .31 calibre ball weighing only 40gr wasn't exactly the "drop-'em-dead-on-the-spot" kind of power a man needed in a gunfight – or to stop a Comanche warrior hell-bent on lifting his scalp. But when your life is on the line, a solid hit from a .22 is better than a close miss with a .44 Magnum – maybe they thought the same way back in the 1800s.

I THINK MOST Pocket Pistols were sold back east in the big towns and cities, and many others given as gifts. I reckon when Samuel Colt offered his Pocket Pistol, people could not resist owning this newfangled weapon. Remember, they were just emerging from the era of single-shot muzzle-loading coat pistols, and the new improved 5 or 6-shot repeaters were quite a novelty. Just as people today continually upgrade cell-phones, folks just had to own one of Colt's new inventions. Indeed, most original Colt Pocket Pistols found today – and there are many – are in factory-fresh condition and may yet remain unfired.

The model 1849 Pocket Pistol was not the first, or the last, small-calibre percussion handgun produced by Colt. Initially, the Paterson plant also produced a small .31 calibre pocket version but only about 500 were made.

THEN, IN 1855, Colt introduced the side-hammer Root's pistol in .28 calibre and later in .31 calibre. I find this a strange move because by then the '49 Pocket Pistol was well-established and selling briskly, so why bring out another Pocket Pistol of an entirely different design?

Today, Colt's model 1849 Pocket Pistol offers the collector a real challenge because there were so many variations – though most very minor. The antique arms expert Norm Flayderman estimates that a fairly complete collection of 1849 Pocket Colts would comprise at least 200 revolvers. So if you thought, as I did, that a complete collection of Colt's Pocket Pistols would simply be guns of different barrel lengths, think again – there's a lot more to those little Colts than meets the eye. And recently I had the pleasure of examining three of these beautiful and historic little revolvers.

THE FIRST CAME as a complete surprise: I was examining what I thought was a leather-covered portable writing chest of the kind used by travelling gentlemen or army officers. Tilting back the lid revealed that its reverse side provided a smooth writing surface, while a narrow lift-up lid inside revealed a compartment holding two inkwells and old fashioned dipping pens. However, to my surprise, there lay a small iron bullet-mould stamped "Colt Patent".

INTRIGUED, I LIFTED up the two flaps covering the interior, where I guessed paper and correspondence would be kept, but instead found myself staring wide-eyed at a beautiful little Pocket Colt, powder-flask and tin of percussion caps all snuggled into their compartments. After more than 150 years the walnut grip had taken on the dark brown colour of an old saddle. As my fingers wrapped around the grip and the four-inch octagonal barrel centred on an imaginary foe, I wondered how many times that little gun had abruptly ended an unpleasant situation. The fit in my hand was perfect and when I thumbed back the hammer I could feel and hear the mechanism was as crisp as the day it left the factory. There was no play whatever in the 6-shot cylinder, either at full-cock or with the hammer down and the trigger pulled back

– a sure test that the gun still locked up tightly and was safe to fire. The butt plate and trigger were silver-plated but the rest of the gun had lost its blueing and was now a silver-grey colour.

The action was crisp and the cylinder locked up nicely

The second Pocket Colt I examined was also cased but the wooden container was not as fancy, nor in as good condition as the first – its beige-lined compartments showed some wear. However, the gun was in excellent condition, as was its bullet-mould and powder flask.

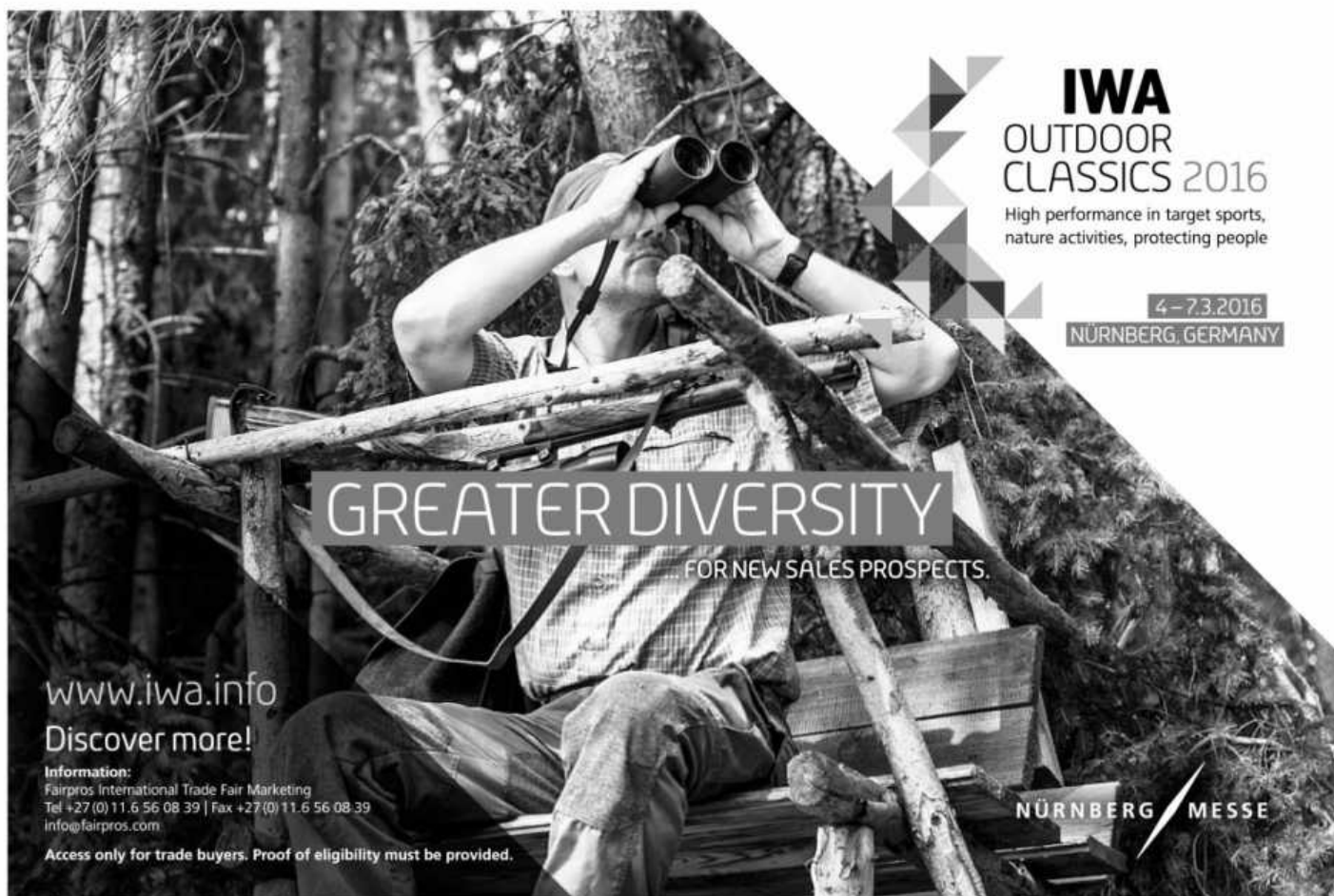


This Colt was different in that it had a 5 inch barrel and a 5-shot cylinder. The varnish on the grip had stood up to the march of time and so had most of the

Left: Transferring his empty Navy Colt to his left hand, the sheriff draws his pocket pistol and fights off the bank robbers.

blueing. Again, the action was crisp and the cylinder locked up nicely. The pistol looked as if it had never been fired.

The third Pocket Colt was uncased. It too, was a 5-shooter with a 5 inch barrel, but its trigger-guard was bigger and made of brass, as was the grip-strap. Another obvious difference was the larger cut-out for easier loading of the balls into the chambers. I could go on and on describing the many differences found in Pocket Colts but space does not permit. Did I want to fire those pistols? Sure I did; but I reckon I have a good idea how they would perform because of the many times I have fired my own Colt Pocket Pistol even though it's only a 'spitting image' replica. The general rule was to get up close, aim low, and keep firing. 'Wild Bill' Hickok taught me that. 



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by **DIRK STEYNBERG**



My Mauser-actioned 10.75x68.

WHENEVER I OPEN my gunroom to other enthusiasts, they always focus most of their attention on my 10.75x68 – probably because it is a rare calibre and the rifle is beautifully made. It has a hexagonal barrel inscribed 10.75mm, 3.66", FOREIGN MAKE, Sold by Midland Gun Co. Birmingham, England, 347. The leaf-sights are marked 100, 200 and 300, and it has a hair-trigger.

The 10.75x68 is a Mauser cartridge developed in the early 1920s for big game hunting. It is often wrongly compared with the .404 Jeffery (10.75x73) but the two have little in common other than the .423" bore-diameter. The .404 Jeffery has a larger case capacity. There were other 10.75mm calibres which eventually became obsolete, such as the 10.75x57 Mannlicher, 10.75x63 and 10.75x65R (Collath).

Cartridges of the World states that the 10.75x68 was used on all kinds of dangerous game, including elephant, and that in power it is a little below the .404 Jeffery and "about on a par with the .375H&H". John 'Pondoro' Taylor

wrote that the 10.75x68 was among the most widely used calibres in Africa and mentioned an assistant game ranger in Kenya who shot 300 elephant with his. Harry Manners used this calibre to shoot many elephant bulls before switching to a .375. My late friend, Dr Lucas Potgieter, who helped me obtain many Mauser rifles for my collection, assured me that the 10.75x68 is adequate for buffalo hunting.

DURING A VISIT to Kenya, I met a well-experienced hunter of the big five who used a 10.75 to cull buffalo during a foot-and-mouth control operation. On one occasion a small herd of buffalo stormed past him and he shot five of them with five shots, dropping them within a couple of metres of one another. His only problem with the rifle was its recoil, which eventually cracked the stock at the grip.

My own 10.75 had a broken stock when I acquired it, which was expertly repaired with copper plates. I eventually had a Bloemfontein gunsmith replace

the stock, also fitting an extra recoil-lug for improved recoil dispersion.

My research has revealed many hunters of the opinion that 10.75x68 bullets might break up, resulting in poor penetration. With the high-quality bullets now available this is no longer a worry. I have shot eland and wildebeest with old 347gr Kynoch factory ammunition and the bullets went right through every time.

My 10.75x68 arrived without cartridges, and I soon learned that almost none existed in South Africa at the time. My only option was to handload, and I think I found the only die set in the country – at Safari and Outdoor in Pretoria – for R2 700. I found a supplier who could manufacture cases for me, but which would be very expensive. I eventually acquired a few old Berdan-primed cases. De-priming these turned out to be a major operation, to say the least.

First I tried the hydraulic method. You need a holder to keep the case upright. Drill a case-sized hole partially into a wooden block; then drill a smaller hole all the way through to allow the

primer to exit. Slide the case into the hole, fill the case with water and insert a precisely-fitting plunger into the case neck. Now hit the plunger hard with a hammer. Some say it works; in my case, it did not. I got myself soaking wet and ended up with a bulged case – with the primer still intact. A more successful method is to drill a small hole at an angle into the primer (being very careful not to damage the case's brass anvil that protrudes into the primer from below). Then insert a sharp object and lift the primer out. The proper method is to use an RCBS Berdan de-capping tool – if you can find one. It must be properly adjusted to match the size of the case. I managed to remove about half the Berdan primers without damaging the anvils, which left me with about 30 once-fired cases.

MY BULLET OPTIONS included Impala in 230gr, 280gr and 320gr; Rhino offered to specially-make 350gr bullets for me, Ken Stewart made core-bonded 350 and 400gr bullets. I experimented with S335 with various bullet weights. When using traditional 347 to 350gr bullets, *Cartridges of the World's* suggestion of 59gr IMR 3031 (similar burning rate to S335) for a 347gr bullet is a good starting point.

I used these loads during a 'Big Game' club shoot, but I had my mind set on a buffalo hunt. Then I met a very keen angler who was anxious to learn fly fishing, so I took him under my wing, introducing him to the Drakensberg's trout waters. At the end of a successful day, we were relaxing in my gunroom,

The factory 347gr Kynoch ammunition (centre) with a box of RWS cartridges at right. To the left is a 7x57 for comparison.



and the conversation turned to my 10.75 resting on the gun rack and my dream of a buffalo hunt. The angler turned out to be the manager of a game ranch in Limpopo, and he phoned me soon after this to arrange a buffalo hunt. In preparation I read all I could find on buffalo hunting in my old *Magnums*, particularly opinions on using solid or soft-nose bullets.

To conserve my 10.75 ammunition, I practiced with my open-sighted 9x57 and 8x57 rifles. For the buffalo hunt, I intended using 347gr Kynoch factory ammunition I had obtained – both solid and soft-nose. These clocked 2300fps over a chronograph. Hearing of my plans, anxious friends bought me two boxes of RWS factory-load ammo (the last

continued on page 35 ►



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RIFLES

BROWNING: A-Bolt, 30-06 R9 999

CZ: 455 Varminter, 22LR R7 200

550 Deluxe, calibers: 270 Win, 7 x 64, 30-06 R13 500

550 308 Win; 243 Win R13 500

HOWA: 1500 204 Ruger SS Syn, Varminter R8 000

1500 6.5x55Se, synthetic stock R8 700

1500 tactical 20", barreled-action, 308 Win R9 300

1500 tactical 20", threaded barreled-action, 308 Win R9 300

1500 Varminter, synthetic stock, 308 Win R9 500

1500 6.5x55Se, laminated T/H stock R9 999

1500 204 Ruger, stainless, laminated, Hunter R10 400

1500 blued Varminter, laminated stock, assorted calibers R11 700

1500 Varminter SS, laminated stock, calibers: 22-250 Rem, 243 Win and 308 Win only R10 400

MARLIN: X7 30-06 Combo, incl Weaver 3-9 x 40 R8 150

X7 Varminter, 28", calibers: 223 Rem and 308 Win R10 450

MOSSBERG: ATR, 243 Win R6 900

MUSGRAVE: M98 Sporter, 308 Win R17 800

M98 Field Magnum, 300 H&H Mag R18 900

M98 28", Varminter, 308 Win, laminated, green R19 500

REMINGTON: 783 30-06, 270 R8 850

700 SPS Tactical, 308 Win R12 999

SABATTI: Rover Tactical, Varminter, ruled Syn 308 and 243 Win R21 000

SAKO: 85 Hunter, 243 Win R24 000

A7 Roughneck, 300 WSM, 28", fluted R27 000

85 Brownbear, 375 H&H R31 200

TIKKA: T3 African Hunter, 308 Win R16 500

T3 Super Varminter, 280 Rem, 300 Win R23 250

VOERE: LBW 375 H&H Mag R16 000

WEATHERBY: Vanguard SS Sin, calibers: 308 Win R13 250

WINCHESTER: Alaskan, 300 WM R16 700

Coyote Lite Varminter, 22-250 Rem R19 000

SHOTGUNS

BERETTA: SP1 686, 28", Field M/c R25 750

CZ: Woodcock 28", over and under R15 500

KHAN ARTHESIS INOX: 12ga, over and under R8 900

KRAL ARMS: A12 Magnum, 12ga, semi-auto R8 500

MOSSBERG: 88 20", pump-action R5 900

SABATTI: CTS Adj Sporting, 30", M/c R25 175

HANDGUNS

CZ: P-07, 9mm P Duty R8 000

75 P-08, 9mm P R8 600

75 P-09, 9mm P, full-size, 1911 R8 850

75 Shadow, 9mm P R12 999

NORTH AMERICAN ARMS: 22 Mag, 1-1/8 barrel R5 950

NORINCO: NP34, 9mm P R5 000

STEYR MANNLICHER: s9-a1, 9mm P, compact R8 299

GLOCK: Gen 4, 19 and 17, 9mm P R9 500

Gen 4, 23 and 22, 40 S&W R9 500

STOEGER: Cougar 8000f, 9mm P, compact R7 400

Cougar 8040f 40 S&W, compact R7 400

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PT809, 9mm P R7 150

PT247, 9mm P, blue R7 800



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WHILE STOCKS LAST
POINT OF ORIGIN

Yellowbilled Duck

(*Anas undulata*)

by **ANDRÉ GROBLER**

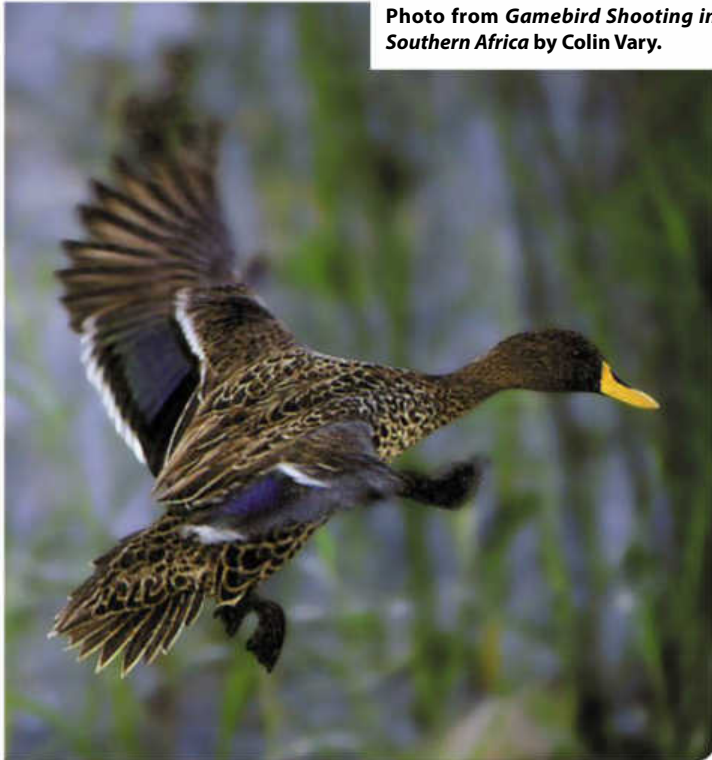


Photo from *Gamebird Shooting in Southern Africa* by Colin Vary.

Yellowbilled ducks feed on waterplant roots, seeds, leaves and stems, water snails, worms, grain crops (maize, sunflower seeds) and green feed such as lucern.

DURING THE DAY these ducks spend their time in the shallow waters and mudflats of dams and other well-watered areas. They are not very active and can be seen plunging from time to time to get to available food underwater. They fly in the late afternoons and early mornings to feeding areas nearby which may include other smaller dams or vleis. Small swampy areas that are sometimes attached to other bigger water sources are ideal places to ambush these ducks. They can gather in large numbers on bigger dams when grain crops are nearby and regularly fly out to these areas in numbers.

Yellowbills are very wary on the ground, on water and in the air. When disturbed they will immediately take off, even from water, with fast and powerful wingbeats.

THE BEST HUNTING method is to find their flightpaths between the open waters and the feeding places. Keep in mind the wind direction as they will fly into the wind to settle. They fly in a straight line and at an even height. Generally they are hunted from hides built near the water's edge. The location of other hides must be known to all hunters and low shots or shots in the direction of other hunters must be avoided. Never shoot at the water. Always try to build hides so that the natural vegetation shields the hides from one another. Wear camouflage clothing and use decoys to bring the birds in close to the hide. Keep movement in the hides to a minimum. Inexperienced hunters should wait until the birds are 25m or less from the hide before shooting, which will also enable them to positively identify the duck by its yellow bill. Most hunting takes place at dusk in low-light conditions when, at a distance, they appear dark, almost black. However, the yellow bill stands out as they draw near. Always use dogs to retrieve fallen birds, especially near open water. Use No 4 or 5 shot.

Many hunters regard yellowbills as the best-tasting local waterfowl. Consult the local authorities about hunting regulations for these birds in the province you'll be shooting – seasonal hunting dates, bag limits and licence/permit required. 

THE YELLOWBILLED DUCK (Afrikaans: *Geelbekeend*) is the most common duck found in Southern Africa and a favourite of local wingshooters. They are found throughout southern Africa, northwards into central and eastern Africa to Ethiopia, but not in the dry areas of western South Africa, Namibia and Botswana.

The yellowbilled duck is of medium build and recognised easily by its bright yellow bill with black saddle and tip. They are dark brown on their backs, head and under the wings, with light brown feathers dotted with dark brown from the neck down across the underbelly. The feet are black, the legs a dark red-brown. They have a patch of metallic green/blue, with white at the edges, on the wings. These birds are generally found at open inland waters such as farm dams, slow-flowing streams, flooded grasslands, open water estuaries, pools, marshes, artificial reservoirs and salt pans. Their presence in an area may vary from season to season and depends on ideal conditions of open water and food.



Full length view of the 10.75x68 Mauser.

two at Rosenthals in Windhoek) but my rifle's bolt would not close on these and there wasn't enough time to find out why. My Kynoch's would have to do.

ARRIVING IN LIMPOPO, I discussed the "softs versus solids" issue with my PH and we decided on a solid for the first shot if the bull was standing alone, otherwise I'd use a soft. I loaded three softs in the magazine and a solid on top. The PH would back me up with his .500 double. During the hunt we managed to stalk within 80 meters of a buffalo herd before we ran out of cover. We moved slowly to a fallen tree trunk to use as a dead-rest. A light wind was blowing directly into our faces.

A good-looking bull stood alone and away from the herd, and we decided to take him. He was facing us at a slight angle, so I aimed just left of centre on his chest. The PH whispered, "Shoot." I neither felt the recoil nor heard the shot, but I was certain it went precisely where the PH wanted it to strike.

THE BULL DASHED off, away from the herd. We waited about 15 minutes and then took up the spoor. When we found him, he was not down, but hiding among a clump of bushes. We stalked closer, and when we came within 30m he suddenly turned and ran off again. He was limping slightly, and when he ran through a clearing I took another

shot. The bull ran down a donga, turned and stood still behind a large bush facing the direction he'd just come. When we entered the donga the bull charged straight at me. I shot him above the eye, dropping him about 3m from us.

MY FIRST SHOT with the Kynoch solid had broken the big shoulder bone, ending up in the stomach. The second shot had gone through the neck and the boss, and the third shot directly into the brain.

All things considered, I believe the 10.75x68 Mauser is an adequate big game cartridge. No wonder it was used extensively in Africa. Personally, my only challenge is getting used to the recoil. The lack of ammunition is a drawback. ■

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Coetzeeberg Kudu

by **ANDRÉ GERBER**

A bitter aloe standing tall on the Karoo plain below the Coetzeeberg.



"I wish you could go once to my old African world and know what it is to stand quite alone on a mountain in the still blazing sunshine, and the clear, clear, blue above you, and the great unbroken plains stretching away as far as you can see." Olive Schreiner

MY HEART skipped a beat. A dark kudu bull briskly crossed a clearing about 350m from us, disappearing within a few seconds. We'd been lucky to spot him – only his movement gave him away. "That's it, that's him!" Neil whispered excitedly. This was the sort of bull we were after. The hunt was on.

Kudu bulls give me the shakes. This comes as no surprise – I grew up with a kudu-obsessed dad in a kudu-obsessed province. I was five years old when I first joined my dad on a driven kudu hunt in Uitenhage's *spekboom* thickets. He shot two bulls on that beat; I remember sitting next to them, amazed at their size and

sheer beauty. So began my intoxication with the East Cape kudu.

Five years later I would join the hunt with a battered old 1916 open-sighted .303. On all such hunts I was both terrified and exhilarated to be clutching a rifle more appropriate for a soldier than a ten-year-old boy. I never did manage to kill anything with it. I went on to shoot my first kudu bull with a .243. When the bull appeared, a farmer standing next to me quickly grabbed my .303 and thrust his .243 in my hands, mumbling something about not killing kudu with an ugly gun.

NOW, ACCOMPANIED by freelance PH Neil Pretorius and local tracker James Mosiwe, I was hunting the Coetzeeberg, north of Pearston. The plains of Camdeboo stretched to the south while the Coetzeeberg formed an amphitheatre north of us. The Coetzeeberg forms part of the greater

Sneeuberg which includes further sub-ranges like the Camdeboo Mountains and others. I find it impossible to come away from here uninspired. Some of the Karoo's greatest prodigies came from these parts, among them Olive Schreiner who wrote *Story of an African Farm* and Eve Palmer, author of the Karoo classic *The Plains of Camdeboo*.

Seeing that bull crossing the clearing, I felt as excited as I did on my first hunt. We were perched on a high ridge overlooking a deep kloof running west to east, intersected by several smaller kloofs running north-south, lending the ridge a concertina-like appearance. We'd been moving slowly along the crest of the ridge in the shade of the mountain ahead of us, while glassing the opposite side of the kloof which was already bathed in the light of the rising sun. The sky was clear but weather reports had warned of a cold front bringing rain and possibly snow later that afternoon.





Charl-Pierre Marais with a beautiful dark Eastern Cape bull he shot on the same trip. Photo by Gerrit Potgieter.

A slight wind from behind must have carried our scent to the wily old bull, who had been on our side of the main kloof before he smartly ducked into the dense bush of one of the smaller intersecting kloofs. We saw him traverse an isolated clearing before he crossed into a second such kloof.

WE SLOWLY MADE our way towards the second kloof, which was thickly wooded with large wild olive trees. Stopping to watch and listen, we heard a stone rolling loudly within the wild olive thickets below. This got my heart beating faster and my excitement mounted. Then two kudu cows flushed from the far side of the small kloof, some 200m from us. Stopping for a moment, they glanced back at us before disappearing over the crest into a third kloof. There was still no sign of the bull. Then he stepped out into the open on the far side, right up on the crest, his great curly horns silhouetted against the sky, a truly magnificent sight.

We scrambled wildly to get into a shooting position, but the bull had caught us napping and was gone in seconds, disappearing into the third small kloof. We moved forward as quietly as we could, but as we reached the third kloof, the two kudu cows once again flushed on the far side, some 300m away. We hurriedly set up the shooting sticks, expecting the bull to follow, but he did not appear. He had simply vanished, and we never saw him again.

I REMAINED on the sticks just in case, while Neil resumed glassing the sunny side of the main kloof. As luck would have it, he spotted another good bull, lighter in colour than the one we'd been pursuing, standing amid a cluster of dead aloes with only his head and neck visible. Over a kilometre away, we'd never have spotted him without binoculars. We decided to give up on the first bull and go after this one. This would entail proceeding to the fork where our side of the main kloof merged with the opposite side. There we'd cross onto the bull's side, walk back again until above his position, then stalk him from above.

The plains below the Coetzeeberg consist of mixed Karoo with bitter aloe, acacia, wild olive and *witgat* trees.



The position from where the final shot was taken. The bull fell about 30m left of the kiepersol. The hunt started on the crest of the ridge on the far side of the kloof in the photo.



I carried my Sako 7x64 and very accurate hand-loads launching 160gr 'conventional' soft-nosed bullets at 2730fps. The previous year, I had tried premium-grade 154gr bullets at 2850fps, but reverted to the conventional bullets for their superior accuracy. Gun-writers frequently urge hunters to use premium-grade bullets on the larger antelope. Prior to this kudu hunt, I dug out old kudu-hunting articles and also re-read much of Peter Flack's book, *Hunting Kudu, Africa's Top Antelope*, in which Peter Kennedy wrote a good chapter on kudu hunting. After having almost lost a great bull that he'd shot with conventional bullets from his .270, Kennedy urges readers to use premium-grade bullets. Reading this made me feel very uneasy, but I decided to stick with my conventional bullets. What an idiot I was.

NEIL MARKED the bull's position among the dead aloes before we made our way across to the sun-drenched ridge of the main kloof. Then we worked our way in a westerly direction, straight into the gusting wind. When Neil was sure we were above the bull's position we turned north and began the descent, my anticipation growing with each step.

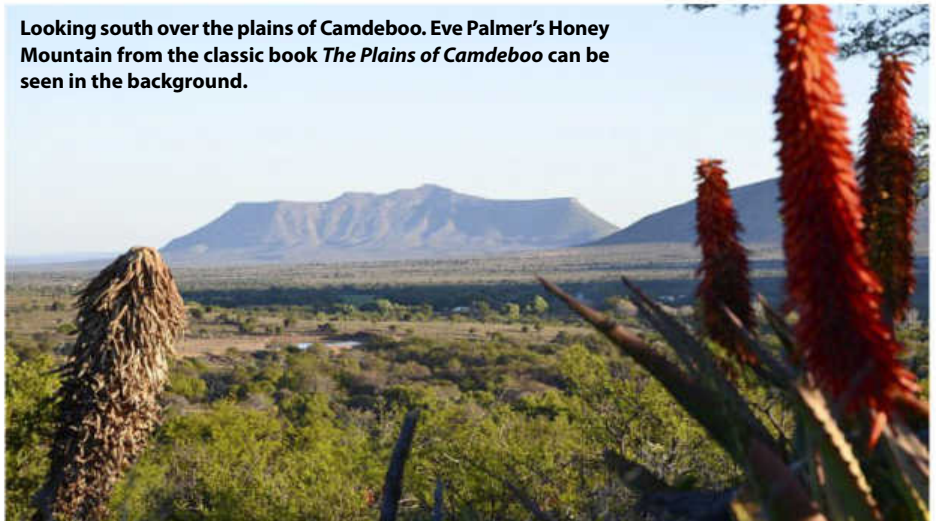
*I froze – a lone kudu
cow, on high alert,
was staring down
into the main kloof*

Moving slower and slower now, we tried to get a glimpse of the bull, expecting him to be very close below us. Reaching a knoll-like outcrop of rock that formed a small precipice below us, we peeked over. I drew in my breath and froze. Directly beneath the outcrop, just 35m away, was a lone kudu cow, looking intensely suspicious. She was on high alert, staring down into the main kloof. Suddenly she gave a hoarse bark,

The bull was shot on the side of a steep north facing ridge.

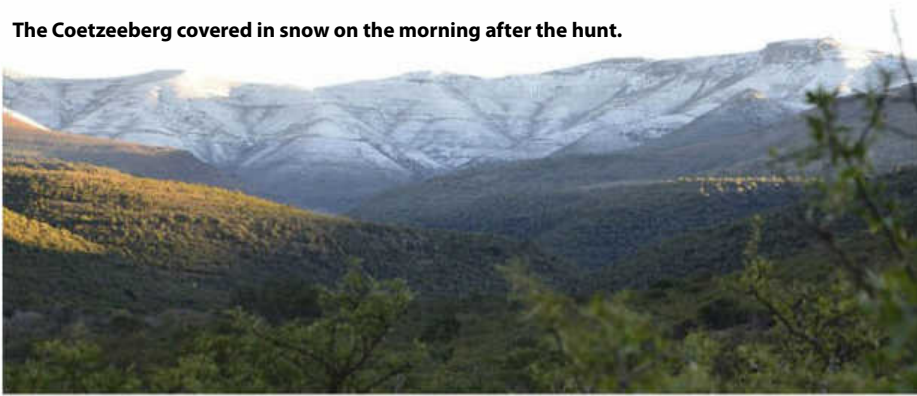


Looking south over the plains of Camdeboo. Eve Palmer's Honey Mountain from the classic book *The Plains of Camdeboo* can be seen in the background.



Freelance PH Neil Pretorius on the left with the author on the right. The author used a Sako 7x64 with a Zeiss Duralyt 3-12x50 to hunt the bull. Photo by Ben-nie van Niekerk.

The Coetzeeberg covered in snow on the morning after the hunt.



startling me, as did more barks that instantly came from other unseen kudu below us. With all this repeated loud barking, I expected the bull to flush, but wherever he was, he stayed put. The atmosphere all around was heavily charged with pent-up energy – this was a 'bottle the moment' moment.

I took a few steps to the left to try and get a better view of the area below the knoll. Then the bull stood up, rising from the brush to face me less than 50 paces away. As I mounted my rifle he

turned to flee. I fired, but he took the hit in his stride, gaining ground rapidly. Knowing I'd hit him, I instantly reloaded, frantically trying to find a target for a second shot, but he was running directly away from me, and flat out. As he was about to go over a ridge, in desperation I shot straight at his rear end. He flinched and disappeared behind the ridge. It took me a few seconds to reach the ridge, where I saw him going at a slower pace and at an angle well below me. My last shot hit him high on the shoulder

and he collapsed, coming to rest a few metres further on amid another bunch of dead aloes.

IT TURNED OUT that none of my three bullets penetrated as it should have. The first struck just behind the last rib, angled toward the far shoulder. What should have been a vital shot if it had penetrated, turned out to be no more than a gut-shot. The conventional jacketed lead-core bullet never got through the stomach.

I sat down next to the fallen bull. He was well past his prime, having seen many winters. I stared out over the Coetzeeberg. Clouds were starting to roll over the mountains; the cold front was fast approaching, bringing rain and snow. Weather, it seems, is fairly predictable. Bullet performance, not so much. My search for a suitably accurate premium-grade bullet for the 7x64 would commence forthwith. 



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deur **JOHAN PRINSLOO**



Foto deur Philip Huebsch.

DIE GEDAGTE om met 'n grootkaliber rewolwer te jag is vir baie jagters niks nuuts nie. Ek het jare lank die droom gekoester om 'n vlakvark te jag met my .44 Magnum, 'n Ruger Super Blackhawk. Ek het uiteindelik die geleentheid gekry tydens 'n besoek aan my seun, Jaco, in die Oos-Kaap. Hy het 'n opening gehad tussen twee groepe jagters waartydens ek kon gaan kuier.

Ek dink Jaco was eers skepties oor my rewolwerjag gedagte, maar na ons 'n draai op die skietbaan gemaak het met die Ruger, het hy besluit om 'n vlakvark jaggeleentheid vir ons te

reël. My groeperings met die rewolwer op 25m was moontlik die finale goedkeuring wat hy gesoek het dat my vlakvarkjag met die Ruger wel moontlik is. Gou tref hy 'n reëling met 'n vriend van hom vir die volgende dag vir die jag van twee vlakvarke op 'n naburige plaas waar hulle volop is. Daar word ooreengekom dat ons twee middelslag vlakvarke, ongeag geslag, kan jag.

Die oggend van die jag breek aan met die mooiste weer denkbaar. Die vorige nag het dit liggies gereën en die veld lyk skoon en nuut. Daar is nie 'n wolkie te sien nie en dit is windstil.

Digte misbanke bedek die klowe al langs die pad na die plaas Thornkloof, waar die jag sou plaasvind.

Vir die jag het ek 236gr Norma HP punte gelaai vir die Ruger terwyl ek my 6.5x54MS, 'n 1903 Take-down-model, ook saam geneem het. Jaco dra sy Howa in .300 Win Mag saam. Die jaggewere is daar net ingeval iets verkeerd sou loop met die rewolwerjag en 'n moontlike gekwete vlakvark opgevolg moes word. Die plaaseienaar het ook gevra dat ons 'n springbok en rooibok moet plat-trek vir vleis. Die res van die jagspan vir die oggend was Bebe, die Xhosa spoorsnyer, en JR, Jaco se Jack Russel hondjie. Bebe is 'n vriendelike innemende jongman met 'n geoefende oog vir spoorsny en om wild in die Oos-Kaap ruigtes raak te sien. Die Jack Russel jag reeds vyf jaar saam met Jaco en het male sonder tal 'n bydra gelewer tot 'n suksesvolle jag in die ruie bosse.

OP THORKLOOF aangekom staan die omringende rante en berge skerp uit teenoor die skoon helder blou lug in die agtergrond. Dit is 'n pragtige dag vir jag. Dit is doodstil op die plaaswerf. So stil dat jy jou eie hartklop kan hoor.

Jaco, JR en ek begin soek vir vlakvarke. Loop en bekruip jag het ek nog altyd geniet. Nogtans, die 'loop' deel van jag begin deesdae 'n bietjie lol veral as 'ou bene' by tye moet tred hou by die energieke treë van 'n jongman. Ten spyte daarvan kruip ons versigtig tussen die bosse deur en probeer hard om nie op los klippe en dooie takkies te trap nie. Die eerste paar bekrui-pogings was in windstil toestande

en elke versigtige tree het nietemin onnodig hard geklink.

’n Warrelwindjie begin waai net voor ons die eerste troppie vlakvarke gewaar waar hulle kop omlaag en knielend vir knolle grawe. Wanneer vlakvarke besig is om met hulle snoete te grawe en te eet is dit ’n ideale geleentheid om nader te sluip, mits die wind in jou guns is. Vlakvarke kan nie goed sien nie, maar kan goed hoor en ruik. Net toe ons nader wil begin kruip verdwyn die varke soos skimme die ruigte in. Ons vermoed die koerslose windjie het ons reuk na die groepie aangedra. Die warrelwindjie kelder later nog ’n paar pogings om naby aan varke te kom.

Die omstandigheid met die wind was besig om ons jagvernuif tot die uiterste te toets. Boonop het ek vooraf besluit op ’n maksimum skiet afstand van ongeveer 50m. Ek was gemaklik met my vermoë met die rewolwer, wat ek jare reeds besit het, vir ’n skoot tot op die afstand.



Bo: Die bakkie by die driffie waar ons gebraai het. Let op die ruie bos in die agtergrond.
Onder: Sissende wors en ’n lui rokie in die jagveld. Dit is ’n gevoel wat geld nie kan koop nie.



Die skrywer, JR, die vark en die Ruger.

Nadat ons weer ’n bloutjie loop op ’n alleenloper vlakvark besluit ons om ’n ander jaggebied te verken en bestudeer ’n stel rante aan die westekant van waar ons staan. Die wind het intussen ook rigting gekry en die rant wat ons bespied is wind op. Op een plek lyk dit of daar ’n paar miershope tussen ’n kolletjie klippe is. Dit lyk egter of die ’miershope’ beweeg en Jaco bevestig dat dit vlakvarke is wat teen die rant wei. Ek besluit om dié keer alleen die groepie vlakvarke te bekruip aangesien daar nie genoeg wegkruip plek is vir twee mense nie.

DAAR IS KORT VOOR LANK net een bos vol voëltent tussen my en die varke. Ek laat my hoed agter, want die hoedrand belemmer my uitsig met die bekruipery. Nou is dit hande- viervoet en dan slaan ek oor na ’n sitposisie en kruip met my hande en sitvlak (sonder om op die holster te sit) vorentoe. Hier en daar seil ek op my maag soos ’n likkewaan sodat duisende los klippies nie teen mekaar klingel en raas nie. Die volgende dag sou ek ontdek hoeveel spiere daar in die liggaam is wat ’n mens nie elke dag gebruik nie.

Uiteindelik kom ek reg agter die bossie tussen my en die trop vlakvarke orent. ’n Jong beer wei die naaste, effens skuins van my af en binne trefafstand. Die Ruger se korrel en visier lyk skielik baie groot en grof teen die vaal lyf van die vark. My asem jaag en my keel is droog van die bekruip. Ek kry dit nie dadelik reg om korrel stil te hou nie. Na ’n



**Bo: Ingangswond agter ribbes.
Regs: Uitgangswond voor linkerblad, min
vleisskade.**



paar diep asemteue, met die Ruger op my linkerhand gestut teen die skietstok, maak ek gereed om die sneller stadig te druk.

Die skoot is oorverdowend en die vlakvark storm met 'n spoed links by my verby, rant af. Ek kry so 'n leëmaag gevoel terwyl ek na die plek toe stap waar die vlakvark laaste gestaan het. Jaco en JR sluit by my aan en ons soek na leidrade. Die klam grond wys merke waar die vark weggespring het. Die 'range finder' bevestig dat die afstand 60m was en ek begin dadelik twyfel. Was dit tog nie maar 'n bietjie ver vir 'n outoppie met 'n rewolwer en oopvisier nie, wonder ek?

Die skoot is oorverdowend en die vlakvark storm met 'n spoed links by my verby, rant af

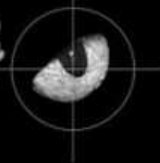
Ons begin spoor vat. Dit wil nie voorkom of JR van enige hulp wil wees nie, aangesien hy heen en weer in die bosse draf. Intussen kontak Jaco vir Bebe, wat by die voertuig gebly het, per radio en vra dat die bakkie gebring word tot aan die voet van die rant. Terwyl ons op die spoor van die vlakvark

loop, dwaal ek effens af om my hoed op te tel waar ek dit gelos het. Dit is egter weg en ek kry dit nêrens nie. Hoe is dit moontlik om 'n hoed te verloor wat op 'n 'maklike' plek neergesit is om weer te kry? Intussen hoor ons die bakkie hier naby maar buite sig stilhou en Jaco meen dit is Bebe wat vir JR oplaai. "Hy het seker nou genoeg bossies gemerk," sê Jaco. Ek vind my hoed die oomblik toe Bebe met JR langs hom in die kajuit by ons stilhou.

JACO WENS MY onverwags geluk want agterop die bakkie lê my vlakvark. Ek kyk in ongeloof na die vlakvark en herken die jong beer waarop ek gemik het. Na soveel jare se droom oor 'n rewolwerjag het dit uiteindelik waar geword.

Die skoot is skuins agter die regterblad in en net voor die linkerblad uit. Ons sny die vark oop, haal die binnegoed uit en sit af na die spruit. By 'n driffie word stilgehou en vuurmaakgoed word gesoek om die wors te braai. Tydens die afslag van die vlakvark kry ek bykans geen vleisskade aan die karkas nie. Die in- en uitgangswonde was skoon van bloed. Die vlakvark en dié van 'n rooibok wat ek die volgende oggend met die 6.5mm platgetrek het, se vleis is verwerk in biltong en droëwors en tuis opgehang om te droog; net toe 'n erge koue front die Vrystaat tref. 

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The GSG-922 Pistol

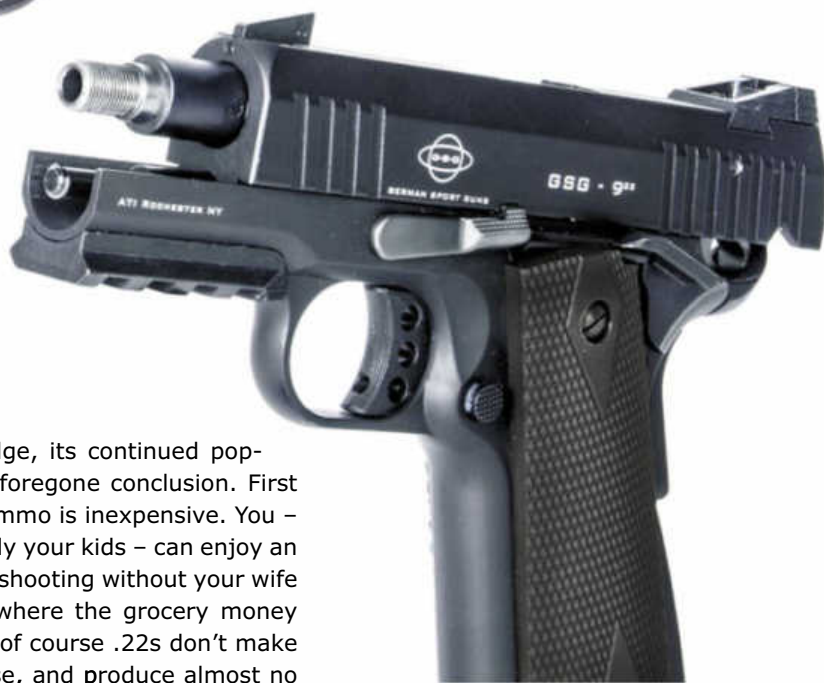
Small Bore 'Old Slabsides'

by **PAUL SCARLATA**
photos **BECKY SCARLATA**



Left: The GSG-922 has all the 'bells & whistles' expected of a modern 1911. Note the ambidextrous thumb and beavertail grip safeties, dual grasping grooves, adjustable rear sight, accessory rail and the trigger has an overtravel adjustment screw.

Below: The barrel is threaded for attaching suppressors. The threads are protected by a removable cap. Removal of a single Allen screw allows changing the front sight.



IF YOU WERE ASKED to name two of the most popular features of pistols today would your answers be polymer frames and high capacity magazines? How about the 9mmP cartridge and double-action only triggers? What about fibre optic sights and a brushed stainless steel finish?

While all of the above deserve a place I believe that two of the dominant trends in pistols on today's market are also two of the oldest – the 1911 platform and the .22 Long Rifle (.22lr) cartridge.

Despite approaching its 105th birthday, the 1911 pistol remains one of the most popular on the world handgun market today. As for the

.22lr cartridge, its continued popularity is a foregone conclusion. First of all, .22 ammo is inexpensive. You – and hopefully your kids – can enjoy an afternoon's shooting without your wife wondering where the grocery money went. Then of course .22s don't make a lot of noise, and produce almost no recoil, which makes them the ideal choice for teaching new shooters and enabling experienced shooters to practise more.

Lastly, most .22s deliver good accuracy, which is why the .22 is a favourite of target and silhouette shooters and is powerful enough for vermin control purposes.

When we hear the words "1911

pistol" I'm sure most of us envision the iconic Old Slabsides chambered for the .45 ACP cartridge. However, during its long production life, the 1911 has been chambered for a number of well-known cartridges such as the 9mmP and .38 Super... and some relatively unknown ones like the 7.65mm Parabellum and .455 Webley Auto. Yes,



Left: Other than its calibre, the GSG-922 apes the appearance and handling of a 'real' 1911.

Below: The single column magazine holds ten .22lr cartridges.

the 1911 platform has proven adaptable to a variety of cartridges. And the .22lr was one of them.

The first commercially produced .22 calibre 1911 was the Colt Ace which was designed to allow inexpensive and low recoil training while maintaining the feel of the 1911 pistol. Produced from 1931 to 1947 it was a full-size, all-steel pistol that used a unique "floating" chamber system that increased recoil for reliable operation. Colt also offered conversion kits that could be fitted to existing .45ACP pistols.

versions, yet others have been scaled down to a size more in keeping with the .22lr cartridge, making them more user-friendly for young shooters. Most feature slides made from aluminium alloy mated to alloy or polymer frames. I was recently given the opportunity to test one of these mini-calibre 1911s.

Produced by the firm German Sports Guns, the GSG-922 mates a Government Model sized grip frame with an Officer's Model length barrel/slide unit.

When I received the GSG-922 I was surprised at its weight. It was a hefty little rascal, tipping the scales at 0.9kg (unloaded). This is a result of both the slide and frame being machined from a zinc/aluminium alloy known as Zamak-5, while the



OVER THE YEARS SEVERAL manufacturers have produced .22 conversion units for 1911 pistols. These have run the gamut from simple and inexpensive to complicated and expensive. And as with most "conversion" products, functioning could be iffy.

More recently we have seen a number of purpose-built .22 calibre 1911s released on the market. While most companies' guns are full-sized, others offer Commander and Officer's Model sized



Left: The GSG-922's rail allows mounting of tactical accessories such as this Insight Technology X2L light/laser.

Below: The rear sight is adjustable for windage and has dual white dots.





Left: Becky had no trouble perforating this combat target in a most pleasing manner. Right: She found the GSG-922 a fine handling, soft recoiling – and fun – pistol to shoot.

barrel, controls, hammer, grip-safety, internals and magazine are made from steel.

NOTE: The name Zamak is an acronym of the German names for the metals used in the alloy: Zink (zinc), Aluminium, Magnesium and Kupfer (copper).

Considering its very affordable price, the GSG-922 comes with all the “bells & whistles” one would expect on a much more expensive 1911. The slide features sharply cut front and rear grasping grooves and is fitted with a windage-adjustable rear sight while the front sight can be changed for elevation adjustments; blades

of different heights are provided for this purpose. Both the front and rear sights feature white dots.

The steel barrel is threaded for attaching a suppressor and faux suppressors and adapters are available as optional equipment. A metal cap protects the barrel threads when not in use.

DUE TO THE lower operating pressures of the .22lr, the GSG-922 is blowback operated which has the benefit of lowering the cost of manufacture. A two-piece recoil spring unit is located under the barrel. The barrel and its integral barrel block are held in the frame by the slide stop shaft and a separate

barrel-fixing pin, both of which must be removed prior to disassembly.

One of the GSG-922’s most distinctive features is a Picatinny rail on the bottom of the dust cover. While most persons would not use a .22lr pistol for defensive purposes, being able to mount tactical lights and/or lasers on one would be advantageous for training purposes.

As on high-end 1911s, the GSG-922 is fitted with ambidextrous thumb safeties, a beavertail grip safety and metal has been removed under the trigger guard permitting the shooter to get a high grip on the pistol. An elongated Commander-style hammer

Left: Test firing was performed at 15m from an MTM K-Zone rest.

Right: These sample targets show that the GSG-922 could produce very tight groups with ammo it liked.



reduces lock time while the ventilated aluminium trigger has an over-travel adjustment screw.

While the majority of 1911s on the market today are fitted with a flat mainspring housing (the part at the back of the grip below the grip safety) the GSG-922 has the arched style which I approve of wholeheartedly. I have fitted these to all my personal 1911s as it makes the pistol point much more naturally.

The metal, single-column magazine holds ten rounds of .22lr and dropped free of the pistol when the release was pressed, loaded or empty, slide forward or locked open. To load the magazine you depress the follower by pushing down on two small pins on its base and inserting rounds. This proved painful after a while and I'd like to suggest that a magazine loading tool would be most welcome.

IN ADDITION TO the thumb and grip safeties, the GSG-922 has a disconnect that prevents the pistol from firing if the slide is not in battery, and, in common with many European-made pistols, a magazine disconnect safety prevents firing if the magazine is removed.

My wife Becky and I test-fired this German rimfire for accuracy at 15m from an MTM K-Zone rest, the results of which can be seen on the accompanying table. As both of us are long time 1911 owners we found shooting the GSG-922 second nature.

The controls were all located in the "proper" positions and could be manipulated without moving the pistol around in your hand. I am not a fan of the three-dot sight arrangement, preferring a plain black rear sight with a coloured or fibre optic front, but even though the three-dot sights on the 922 were on the small side, with concentration they provided a decent sight picture. The trigger had the usual new gun stiffness but broke crisply with the application of 2.3kg of pressure.

While the manufacturer recommends using .22lr ammo with velocities of at least 1250fps to ensure

SPECIFICATIONS: GSG-922

Calibre	.22lr
Overall length	161mm
Barrel length	86mm
Height	140mm
Weight	0.9kg (unloaded)
Sights	front: blade with dot rear: square notch with dual dots adj for windage
Magazine	10rds
Materials	
receiver & slide:	Zamak-5 zinc alloy
barrel:	steel
Finish	Black anodized
Grips	Brown synthetic
Features	Picatinny rail, threaded barrel, ambi thumb safeties, beavertail grip safety, extra set of black grips, extra front sights, faux silencer (optional), carrying case, lock & owner's manual

TEST FIRING RESULTS:

Ammunition	Best Group	Velocity
Remington 40gr Thunderbolt	44mm	1019fps
Federal 38gr Classic	38mm	1056fps
CCI 40gr Mini-Mag	33mm	1102fps
Winchester 40gr T22 Target	40mm	1043fps

proper functioning, we did not experience a single failure to feed, fire or eject with our four brands of test ammo, all of which chronographed well under that velocity.

While I would not normally recommend a .22 pistol for defensive purposes Becky said, "Why not?" As I did not have a good answer to that I set up a pair of combat targets and we took turns running the GSG-922 through a series of offhand drills from 5m and 7m.

BECKY WAS OBVIOUSLY having a good day because of the thirty rounds she launched at her target, only four landed outside the 9 and 10 rings... and not very far outside! I credit such performance to the fact that she had an excellent marksmanship teacher. Ahem... let's move on.

If you want to train, practise or plink with a pistol that apes the feel, handling and operating drill of your favourite 1911, all without the levels of noise, recoil and penetration, and at a considerable savings on ammo, I believe that the GSG-922 might be just what you're looking for.

The suggested retail price of the GSG-922 is R6 950. Contact the local agents, Tactical 22, on 011-807-5756 or tim@tactical22.co.za. 

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How Not to Hunt Lions

by **GANYANA**

illustration **FRED MOUTON**



DURING THE Rhodesian bush war, the lion populations grew and spread. When the war ended, the livestock farmers were forced to take action to control the numbers. My father steered clear of night hunts for lion. "I don't have the rifle for it," he said. "And lions own the night. Lazy cowards by day, they become fierce killers the moment the sun sets. You need at least a 9.3, preferably a .404, with a good scope for night work." It seemed his neighbours held much the same view, for it was mostly the older sons rather than the fathers who sat in the blinds near the Botswana border, waiting for the lion to come in.

I was not yet fifteen when I was invited on a night hunt. A small pride on the Botswana side had figured that the safest cattle-killing method was the quick, in-and-out by night trick. Within a fortnight, they had taken one of our cattle and five of our neighbour's. His 18-year-old son was determined to sort the problem out. My dad inspected our blind to ensure that Schalk's father had built it properly. He'd used 3" steam pipe to reinforce the front. I borrowed a scoped .375H&H with good Norma soft points to use. To describe the experience as educational would be a masterpiece of understatement. Both of us went

into it supremely confident. We'd seen plenty of dozy well-fed lions shot by day, and really, there was nothing to it.

WE WERE comfortably settled into the blind well before dusk. We had dragged the partially-eaten carcass of their last kill up and down the border road, which was illegal as it was on the Botswana side of the fence, then used a chain to secure it to an immovable anchor sunk deep in the sand.

It was scarcely dusk when the strong smell of lion wafted in on the still night air. They were right there... somewhere... It was still light enough for us to see most things, but absolutely

nothing moved, nor were there any night sounds... even the bats seemed give the area a wide berth. The crickets, cicadas and nightjars had suddenly stopped calling. The king was present and all the creatures of the bush respectfully shut up and sat tight.

AS IT GREW darker I became acutely conscious of the need for a really good torch. It was the night of the dead moon, and although the sky was clear, the starlight served only to cast even darker shadows in the gloom of the bush. We had hung a light from a spindly tree next to the bait. It had red jell over it and was wired to a motorcycle battery in the blind, with a rheostat, the idea being that I would gradually turn it brighter until Schalk could see to shoot.

Of course, we both had torches, but this was before the age of Maglites, and the little square, two-cell job I'd taken off the front of my bicycle was about as good as torches got in Rhodesia at the time. Mine threw a beam all of three metres, and Schalk's was no better. Given that we'd brought a motorcycle battery for the bait-lamp, we really should have thought to bring a decent shooting lamp. It occurred to me I could have brought a couple of the old carbide miner's lamps my father used for fishing. In fact, sitting in the dark with the heavy odour of lion smothering

us like a wet blanket, any sort of decent light would have been worth swapping one of the rifles for.

SCHALK NUDGED me and I gradually turned up the red light hanging above the bait to a very dull glow. Schalk peered through his scope but there was nothing to be seen. A faint breath of air moved the leaves ever-so slightly. If we weren't so tense we probably wouldn't have noticed it at all, but now it seemed the whole bush had come alive. Schalk nudged me again and I turned the lamp up to full brightness. All this achieved was to make the shadows even blacker, while the eerie red light seemed to heighten any movement by a leaf or blade of grass.

Suddenly there was a movement near the bait and a gigantic lion rose into plain view, materialising out of the grass. Both of us grabbed our rifles. It was at this moment that Mrs Lion decided that, if the family was to enjoy an uninterrupted dinner, she had better get rid of these two pesky pseudo-hunters sitting watching. With our concentration riveted on the lion out front, she stuck her head through the canvas flap that served as a door at the back of the blind... and roared!

I can't speak for Schalk, but I honestly don't think more than my toes touched the ground anywhere between

the blind and the Landrover parked a mile or so away. All I know for sure is that Schalk reached the vehicle ahead of me by enough of a margin to smoke half a cigarette and do serious justice to the bottle of medicinal brandy in the toolbox.

DAYLIGHT TOLD THE true story. There had been only three adults and four small cubs. The male had been a youngster with barely any mane to speak of – certainly nothing like the 6-foot-high-at-the-shoulder monster I had seen loom over the carcass. The female with the cubs had been hiding in the bush about 50 metres to our left. Pawprints and scuff marks showed how the second lioness had slowly and carefully stalked us. From the time we first smelled them to the moment she invited us to bugger off, was nearly two hours.

How long had it taken her to silently slither into position, and how had she co-ordinated this with the diversion caused by the male to ensure maximum surprise effect? Once we had so ignominiously fled, none of the lions had taken any further interest in us; the two females had immediately ceased all stealth and casually walked up to the kill to begin feeding. They hadn't even bothered to post a sentry, as they occasionally do when heavily hunted. Clearly, they knew we'd not be back that night! ■

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Use Enough Bullet

by **DIETER CHELIUS**

Nyansile with the fallow deer waiting for the pick-up vehicle.



THE BLESBUCK HERD was milling just beneath the crest of the saddle, next to a rocky outcrop. They suspected that something was wrong, but hadn't spotted me at the foot of the mountain, or perhaps hadn't identified me as a threat. With no need to rush, I took my time, sat down, ranged the blesbuck and opened the bipod on my .30-06. I selected a fine ram, took a few deep breaths and fired. I *knew* that the crosshairs were spot-on the ram's chest as the shot went off. When the herd, with 'my' ram among them, ran up the mountainside and over the saddle, I realized that something was very wrong.

My brother Karl and I were on our first hunting trip in the Eastern Cape, on Raoul Lucas's farm, *Welkom*, in the magnificent surrounds of Tarkastad. I had set my heart on bagging a black wildebeest, though the gender and horn-size was unimportant to me.

On our first morning Raoul dropped Karl off to walk the mountains and we drove around the farm. We spotted wildebeest herds on several occasions, but always running. Finally we found a lone wildebeest cow standing about a kilometre away. Using a small bush as cover, we managed to get within 50m and I took the shot, hitting the

cow through the lungs. I was surprised to see her run seemingly unhindered for about 400m. I followed up with a raking shot as she angled away, yet she ran a further few hundred meters, then stopped and turned side-on. Confused, I put a third shot into her vitals. She walked away, and only after a few minutes, went down. I wasn't at all happy. In the follow up I made sure to get close to the cow, for both shots roughly 75m away, with seemingly little effect. After some thought, I put it down to the wildebeest's legendary toughness. The rifle was certainly shooting straight.

Author with the first springbuck.



Next, I was keen to take either a representative kudu bull or a good mountain reedbuck. Raoul and I hunted the upper reaches of the mountain range where both species occurred. We spotted a family of mountain reedbuck; the ram was standing 200m away, sunning himself on a large boulder. His horns were good and I was keen to taste mountain reedbuck venison. At the shot I perceived that my crosshairs were about two inches left of centre on the chest.

THE RAM BOLTED and during our follow-up we found blood. After a protracted search, Raoul decided to call for the neighbour's dogs. With these, and extra farm-workers, plus Karl, we spent the rest of the day searching, but to my dismay, found no trace of the reedbuck. I assumed full responsibility, putting it down to my off-centre shot, but to my mind, this small antelope should have succumbed to that shot. I was puzzled, but as yet no alarm bells were sounding.

I decided to "get back in the saddle" and finish the day on a high note, so we went after blesbuck. That was where we came in at the start of this tale.

Clearly, I had a problem but had no idea what it was. That evening Raoul, Karl and I discussed the issue over a

few beers. We covered all aspects: the shooting distances, trajectories, steadiness on taking the shots, and tried to figure it out. Then someone asked what ammunition I was using. I replied that I had used non-expanding monolithic solids, as I'd been told that Eastern Cape conditions typically call for long shots, and these monolithic solids shoot to flat trajectories. I had done some research, and admittedly there are dif-

fering opinions on the issue, but range tests proved these bullets very accurate in my rifle and I considered the .308 sized wound channels sufficient for the job. It seems I was wrong, I said.

IN MY HUNTING KIT I found an old box of Barnes-X 168gr ammunition I had bought three years earlier but never used or even tested at the range. Next morning I went to the farm's shooting range and sighted in my rifle with this ammunition. Then Raoul and I went looking for springbuck. We found a herd in an inhospitable area high up in the hills, so I walked-and-stalked them on my own, using the erosion ruts in the hill's steep slope to stalk to within 80m of the herd. I went prone, had a dead-rest on my bipod, and the animals were unaware of my presence. Easy shot! Well, I missed, and the dust cloud erupted some 50cm from the animal I was aiming at. It seemed I had not only lost two animals the previous day, but my confidence as well.

I got back to Raoul and told him I was giving up hunting. At that, he took my rifle, nominated a stone at 100m and hit it dead on. "See, there's nothing wrong with your rifle. Let's find another springbuck". Shell-shocked, I

Author with his fallow deer.



obeyed, and after about an hour we found another herd high up on the mountain and watching us from their elevated vantage point. I went off on my own again, trying to get myself into a more positive frame of mind as I stalked them.

I could get no closer than 265m (ranged) and again went prone with the rifle on the bipod. After a few deep breaths and with my heart in my mouth, I fired. I saw the impact through the scope and watched the springbuck go down on the spot. I was so relieved I could have cried.

My confidence was further boosted when two more springbuck at much the same distance dropped *instantaneously* to my shots. On the way home for lunch we spotted a herd of fallow deer in which was a stag that I had hunted earlier. I jumped out of the bakkie and ran about a kilometre after them, but they disappeared over a crest. Reaching the

crest, I saw no sign of them and concluded that they must have entered a wooded area next to a large dam some 500m away.

We entered the wood quietly and I turned the scope magnification right down. Midway through the wood the herd suddenly appeared from behind some bush not 20m away. The stag I wanted was quartering away and I had to place the shot quite far back. He ran only five metres and fell dead.

AT THE SLAUGHTER facility I inspected the wound channels. The cutting action created by the four expanding 'petals' of the Barnes-X bullets had caused devastating destruction to the internal organs, yet without undue meat damage. I had shot the fallow deer at very close range; the bullet had held together and penetrated through about a metre of tissue from behind the ribs through to the opposite shoulder, where it exited. What

impressed me most was how instantly the animals went down to the shot – less distress for the animal and more venison in my freezer.

Since then I have used Barnes-X successfully on warthog, a big kudu bull at 220m, blesbuck, impala and even a big eland cow. I am convinced that, had I used Barnes-X instead of monolithic solids, the wildebeest would have gone down after a very short run. In the case of the reedbuck, the wider wound channel would have compensated for my slightly off-centre shot, and the blesbuck would never have made it over the mountain.

Monolithic solids may be effective for headshots and top-of-the-heart shots, but that is not good enough for me. Mishaps will occur in the hunting field, and I want a bullet that will provide the best possible performance under field conditions. For this reason I will be using Barnes-X for hunting in future. 

SHOOTER'S CLINIC

Only queries of sufficient novelty or general interest can be published. It is impossible for us to give personal answers. Please TAKE CARE with firearms and ammunition. Magnum has no control over readers' components or techniques and cannot entertain claims of any nature whatsoever.

Case Filler

What can I use as filler material in a .308 case? According to "Hand-loading Series Part 2, Components & Terminology", (*Magnum*, July 2015) it seems necessary to use a filler to take up space in the case so as to get better accuracy. According to another article in *Magnum*, Tudor Howard-Davies used "kapok", but never explained what that is. After some thought, it occurred to me to use a small amount of Jungle Oats, topping it with Dacron. – **Dawid Steenkamp, Western Cape**

► The most generally recommended filler material for rifle cartridges is Dacron, which is used to fill certain sleeping bags, winter jackets etc. You must ensure that it is genuine Dacron (the garment's label should tell you or ask at a material shop) as many sleeping bags and quilted jackets today are filled with other fibrous material such as nylon and polyester, which can melt from the powder flame and foul your bore.

Kapok is cotton fibre, which, if it is

still used for stuffing pillows and kids' toys, would work well enough as a filler. Bear in mind that cotton fibres are readily combustible (most gun powders are made with cotton fibre or gun-cotton) so caution is advised. The best filler of all is a commercially made fibrous powder formulated especially for use as a cartridge filler (it is readily compressible), such as Mix 47 Shot Buffer or Puff-Lon ballistic filler. These products are not readily available in South Africa. If you can't get either of the above and you are in a hurry, fillers that are also commonly used are tissue paper or dry mealie meal. If you use mealie meal, use enough to achieve a slightly compressed load (put in the powder, then keeping the case upright, top it up with mealie meal, enough to reach part way up the case neck to ensure a slightly compressed load). If it is loose, and the case is jostled around (loading from the magazine) the mealie meal will mix with the gunpowder, and this could affect combustion.

You could also use a small wad of tissue paper to separate them. If you use tissue paper, just check after firing that no burning fragments of tissue paper could set the dry veld grass alight and cause a damaging fire. Remember that fillers add to the weight of what is called the 'ejecta' which means, when calculating your load, you should reduce the powder charge slightly. Its weight cannot be equated with bullet weight, since the filler does not generate the friction, hence initial inertia of the bullet, meaning that grain-for-grain, it does not generate the same pressures. If your load is substantially below maximum, you should be fine, but if you are loading maximum loads, the filler could raise your pressures to potentially harmful levels. We at *Magnum* have never heard of oats being used as a filler. Oats flakes are quite large, however, and might clump together. Mealie meal is fine and consistent, and would be the first choice after Puff-Lon, Buffer or Dacron. 

Evakool Forever?

KEEPING THE CHOPS and beers cool on a hunting trip has cost me a lot of money in iceboxes. Initially I opted to buy a box at the local supermarket. I soon lost the lid; it blew off the back of the truck while driving. So I bought another and another...

Later I invested in more expensive boxes, but they also lost the lids and deformed when hunters sat on them. I soon learned that as with everything in life you get what you pay for and decided to invest in heavy duty iceboxes. These boxes can cost up to ten times more than the normal supermarket variety but can, with proper care, last a lifetime and above all keep the drinks and meat cold for a lot longer.

WHEN DECIDING on a box my requirements are simple, the icebox must be sturdy enough to stand or sit on, be properly insulated, the lid must seal very tight and replacement parts must be available.

Evakool, an Australian company, produce and distribute boxes like these and on receiving the test model I immediately realized that it met most of my requirements. The only questions were how long it would keep the ice frozen and how much abuse it could take?

Evakool was established in Queensland in 1994 to provide outdoor lovers with longer lasting iceboxes. They are designed to withstand the harsh conditions of Australia, which are similar to ours. The company says their fibreglass and polyethylene iceboxes are a cheaper alternative to portable fridges, but they are just as high-quality and reliable. They have sold close to 1 million fibreglass and polyethylene iceboxes worldwide. The boxes are sturdy enough to be used as seats, making them perfect for fishing trips. Equipped with drainage bungs and smooth surfaces, they are also easy to clean.

The box we received was the model IK060 with a 60 litre capacity, weighing 8kg and the external dimensions are 570mm x 425mm x 465mm (L x W x H). It is made of polyethylene (plastic) and this model has thicker walls than normal.

It is a very strong box, two big men sat on it and I (weighing 120kg+) stood on it without it suffering any ill effects. The local distributor claims that it is strong enough to withstand driving the front wheel of a Land Cruiser onto it.

The lid seals with a hard rubber strip and the hinges and handles are of a hard plastic that screws onto the box and lid. The same goes for the latches that secure the lid, but they have elastic bands that need to be hooked when closing the lid. The hinges, handles and latches can be ordered separately and replaced with the help of a screwdriver if they break.

THE BOX ALSO has a drain plug with a screw-on head on the outside. The tap is recessed into the bottom of the box for protection.

The construction of the box is excellent. It is strong enough to take all punishment dished out in the hunting field. It makes an excellent chair or table and should be virtually indestructible. The only gripe I have is that the elastic bands used to secure the lid get caught under the lid when closing it. This means that both hands are needed when closing the lid to ensure one of the elastics isn't caught between lid and body. It is a small matter, how-



Screw-on hinges, handles and latches to close the lid. Easy to replace if they should break.

ever, and does not detract from the quality of the product.

The manufacturer states that this box can keep ice frozen for up to 6 days. This is a highly subjective statement of course, depending on the ambient temperature and how many times the lid is opened. However, in our test I filled the box to three quarters with ice and left it outside in the shade. The lid was briefly opened twice a day and drinks could be served with ice five days later. Unfortunately I had to travel and could not continue with the test, but there was enough ice left to last at least another day.

SELLING AT R2 200 it certainly costs more than the common or garden variety, but it should prove a lifetime investment and can be recommended. The importers, Evaport Outdoor from Potchefstroom, stock boxes from 10 to 200 litres. Contact them on 083-630-7282, info@evakool.co.za or visit www.evakool.co.za to order online. 



Above: The bull had left the security of the bush below the cliffs. We could see him coming down the hill through the intermittent bush. A fallen limb provided a good kneeling shooting position. Inset: Author's good luck feathers. The two on the left are the originals, one of them somewhat worse for wear. The one on the right is the new addition.



The Third Feather

by **TIM CRITES**

I AM NOT NORMALLY superstitious but I do have one or two harmless quirks. One in particular began in April 2006, while Nick Kilbride and I were hunting blue wildebeest (see 'Tough Wildebeest', *Magnum* March 2011). When writing that story, I did not mention that, while tracking the bull, I had picked up two guineafowl feathers. Nick politely whispered, "Guineafowl," then instantly reverted full attention to the job. I put them in the pocket of my hunting jacket. After I'd gone toe-to-toe with the wildebeest, the feathers became a sort of good luck charm.

After that I never hunted without those two guineafowl feathers in my jacket pocket. Nick was tragically taken from us in 2007, which made this good luck charm all the more important to me. Yet, when I recently had the good fortune to hunt with my buddy Angus, I somehow failed to replace the feathers after washing my jacket. I realized my error too late and was secretly annoyed with myself.

Angus and I were hunting buffalo – a particular buffalo, which Angus had stressed would show great determination to do us bodily harm if given the

opportunity. Therefore I could make no mistakes and every shot must count. With this vote of confidence ringing in my ears, I ran every cartridge through my .416 Rigby to check that all fed perfectly. I wiped them off and placed them in the loops of my jacket. I placed four Hornady Dangerous Game Solids in the magazine of my CZ 550 Safari Classic, and one Dangerous Game Expander in the chamber. I dialled my scope to its lowest setting and off we went on foot in search of our buffalo.

Approaching from downwind, we quietly visited a couple of water holes,

checking for tracks. Finding none, we made our way high up into the cliffs overlooking thick bush where Angus knew the buffalo liked to hide. Oddly, on that first day, I was glassing and searching for the bull while part of me dreaded finding him. I actually didn't want things to go too easily, leaving me feeling I hadn't earned it. I needn't have worried.

WE SEARCHED the area below for another half-mile or so then moved down into some bush that was too thick to see into from above. Slowly we edged into the darkness, all senses alert, expecting the buffalo to come from any direction at any moment and at close quarters. We found nothing, not even a track.

The next day we began our search in the thickest bush we could find, reasoning that since we had not seen the bull in the open, this was about the only place he could be. Ever so slowly and quietly we stalked into the wind, searching every inch before moving forward. At one point we were on our knees trying to get through as quietly as possible, when suddenly there was a loud crash just a few yards ahead – branches snapping, the clicking of hooves on stone and horns whacking a limb or two – followed by total silence. We waited, allowing the sudden rush of adrenalin to subside. Then we silently crept forward and soon found fresh tracks. "Eland," whispered Angus. So, I thought to myself, all that adrenalin and it wasn't even a buffalo.

WE SPENT A FEW more hours combing the bush but found nothing. Somewhat dejected, we trudged back to camp. For well over a week we had hunted hard in Zululand, also staying up late for bush-pig. After spending days negotiating rough terrain, stalking through thick bush with nerves strung taught, our search for the buffalo was beginning to take its toll. I was tired and a little stressed, and the fact that I remained miffed about forgetting my lucky feathers wasn't helping. This hung over me

like a dark cloud. How could I have been so mindless, and what mistake would I make next? Silly, I know, but that's what was going on in my mind.

NEXT MORNING WE located fresh buffalo tracks. Again we found ourselves creeping through the bush, eyes peeled for movement. Suddenly a dove fluttered loudly away, mere feet from us, causing us both to jump nervously, whispering curses. After gathering ourselves for a few minutes, we began to move on, but were almost immediately met with the sound of snapping twigs and breaking branches, followed

The guides were rapidly running out of bush that could hold the buffalo. This caused the tension to mount as we expected him to come out at any second, knowing that when he did, we might be right in his chosen path. But nothing happened – nothing whatsoever. This was most puzzling. He simply had to be in there, yet there was no sign of him. We again searched the area for spoor. I found fresh tracks around a water hole, which appeared to lead in a direction that would take him around and behind us, but I lost them before forming a definite picture. Then Angus discovered the tracks I had lost.



Author with his .416 Rigby and the hard-earned buffalo bull.

by the drumming of hooves. We had finally located our buffalo. Or rather he had located us. There was a trail which we figured he must cross, so we went there in the hope of finding spoor, but found nothing.

Angus instructed two guides to walk up on the cliff overlooking the bush and to slowly make their way along these, tossing rocks down from time to time in an attempt to dislodge the bull from his lair. Angus and I would position ourselves to watch the intermittent bush through which the bull would have to travel. We hoped that even if he did not offer a shot, we'd see where he went and might be able to stalk him.

We had been fooled once again, and I had yet to even set eyes on this bull.

We knew he was there, he knew we were there, and so far he seemed to be running the show. Fatigue and a few aches and pains were working to discourage me; we seemed no closer to finding the buffalo than when we had started.

ANGUS SUGGESTED that we drive to high ground and glass the area, hoping to catch him feeding or going to water before dark. We got out of the bakkie and carefully approached the edge of the cliff to peek over. I had been to this particular spot before. There is a buf-

falo skull and a sign bearing Nick Kilbride's name, date of birth and date of death, fastened to the rock. His ashes had been scattered there. As we scanned the area below, my mind wandered back to when Nick and I would talk of buffalo hunting and what books we had read or wanted to read on the topic. I turned to look at the sign behind me and thought how I wished he were here. He would have enjoyed it and I would have enjoyed having another gun along. My next emotion was self-disgust, almost shame, as I once again recalled having forgotten my lucky guineafowl feathers.

SEEING NOTHING, we moved to another area. Quietly, almost accepting defeat, we searched the new terrain. "There he is!" said Angus. "What?" "There he is! I don't know how, but there he is," repeated Angus. I peered through my Leupold to see a buffalo bull below us, grazing as if he hadn't a care in the world. "And what a buffalo!" I said. "Look at the boss on him! Wow!"

The sun was fading fast, making me a bit uncertain about opening hostilities with a proven combative buffalo. We both hated to lose the opportunity but also knew we needed to be cautious. We ran to the bakkie and began the long, bumpy drive down the mountain.

Once down below, we still had a long way to go before we could even begin a stalk, yet Angus suddenly asked, "Is that him? It looks like he's coming this way, though I can't imagine why." I quickly spotted the buffalo; he was

clearly on his way somewhere. Angus and I crouched low and quickly moved into a low wet area full of thick grass. We had a long way to go but the grass would afford us cover and hopefully we'd be able to intercept our buffalo.

We had covered only about a hundred yards when we spooked a few waterbuck. Even though still far away, the bull took notice of the animals scurrying away. We crouched down in the grass, waiting for the bull to move again, then lined ourselves up behind a few trees and quickly closed the distance.

*Angus and I
crouched low and
quickly moved into
a low wet area full
of thick grass*

Having made it to the trees I was feeling pretty good about our situation. It looked as though I would be given the opportunity for a shot with the buff broadside and in the open. With the trees I had a defensive position to work from. A far cry from the thick bush, close quarter, start-shooting-if-you-see-him scenario I had been expecting.

I took a kneeling position by a large fallen limb and began preparing myself mentally. "Stay in the lower third of the body, make every shot count, focus, focus, focus." As the bull came on,

Angus whispered: "He's not going to get closer so take him when you feel okay with it." I placed the crosshairs on the bull's shoulder and began to swing with him, as he was clearly not going to stop.

I don't remember hearing anything but when I squeezed the trigger the buffalo rocked back hard and then continued to move forward. Without removing the rifle from my shoulder I bolted in another cartridge, took careful aim and hit him again, bolted another cartridge and fired again, then again, and again. I fired each shot rapidly, but taking great care to make every shot count. I could see each round impacting where I wanted them.

AFTER THE FIFTH round I flung the bolt open, slammed three fresh cartridges into the rifle and closed the bolt. The bull had rocked back hard with all five shots but showed little inclination to throw in the towel. Finally, just as I had the rifle half-way back into my shoulder, the bull stumbled and fell, tried hard to get up again, but then lay back and stayed there. Angus slapped me on the back with a hearty "Well done." My mind was still in a fog and I was sort of tingling from adrenalin, or possibly recoil, I thought as I looked down at my five spent .416 Rigby cases. I reached out to retrieve them, but my hand stopped just short of the first one. Lying next to it was the feather of a guineafowl. Scarcely able to believe it, I picked it up and slipped it into my jacket pocket. Coincidence? 



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A Slip for all Seasons

by **CHARLES DUFF**



The author's El Paso gun slips.

THERE ARE GUN BAGS, and then there are gun slips. The former are for rifles and handguns and are mainly used during transportation. A gun slip is very different. It is for shotguns and has many more uses than the gun bag. Yes, transportation is a big concern, but the main difference is that shotgunning is a convivial sport. At shooting ranges and in the field, if you are not actually using your gun it is good manners, after showing the gun to be empty, to put it into your gun slip. It is so much safer, both for us and the gun, and most of us do not enjoy seeing people traipsing around a range with naked shotguns – it's just not cool.

IN THE FIELD you will be frequently squeezed into the back of a bakkie with several fellow hunters and some dogs, and then go jolting off over farm tracks. In such cases an unbagged shotgun is just asking to get knocked, dented or scratched. Moreover, too many shooters leave their guns in unsuitable places

such as on vehicle roofs, propped up against trees and suchlike. Unbagged, they are likely to get damaged.

Rifle bags differ markedly from shotgun slips in shape, being usually made to accommodate a mounted telescopic sight and often having only short carrying handles. Most have all sorts of pockets built into the sides, presumably for ammunition, licences, ID documents etc. You can identify a shotgun slip by its slim outline and tapered shape. It may not have side pockets, but a good sturdy carrying sling is indispensable. I see many shotgun slips in gun shops with short carrying handles but no shoulder strap and wonder at the manufacturer's lack of market knowledge. At the very least they should all have the necessary loops so that a sling can be retro-fitted. Ideally the external material should be waterproof, or at least shower-proof. I have often ended up sitting on one, having forgotten to bring a seat with me on a duck hunting outing.

To be truly secure it is important that the shotgun cannot slide about in its bag. All too many bags have minimal padding, if any. The padding in a good slip should hold the gun quite firmly in place and be substantial enough to protect the gun should it fall over. I have had a gun fall off the roof of a station-wagon and remain unmarked due to the well-padded and snug slip. Another important requirement is that the zip should be full gun-length but not overlong.

SLIPS CAN GET wet and must be capable of drying quickly and easily. A side-pocket or two can be a good idea but many I have seen are too small to take a boxed set of multi-chokes with their tool. Makers please note that these plastic boxes are pretty-well standard and measure about 150x80x40mm. The zip on a gun slip closes towards the butt-end and has to go around a corner to fully close. It is good practice to carry the bagged gun slung from

your shoulder *with the muzzles downwards*. That is, unless you have boundless trust in the efficacy of zips and can remember to fully close it every time. Carried butt-down, the gun can too easily fall out.

The other day I was shopping for a slip as a birthday present for a friend and went to one of the new 'emporium' type of gun shops now becoming popular. I was shattered by the prices. There was one sling-less slip with inadequate padding at R600 and all the rest were R2 500 and more. Top of the line was an admittedly beautiful all-leather and sheep's-wool lined offering marked "Purdey" at well into five figures. I suppose if you have just spent over a million Rand on such a top-of-the-line gun, R12 000 or so for the slip is a mere bagatelle. It had all the bells and whistles, side-pockets, reinforced muzzle-ends etc, but unless well cared for, leather in our Highveld climate dries

out rapidly. It requires regular applications of hide-care products or it cracks and perishes quite quickly. Give me canvas every time.

I get my slips from El Paso whose products are good and prices reasonable. The slip I eventually bought for

*In our Highveld
climate, leather
dries out rapidly
unless well cared for*

my friend was extra-long at 1.33m, for a sporting gun with 32" barrels and extended chokes, yet I paid just over R600 retail. The muzzle-end was reinforced, the padding more than adequate, and a nylon webbing sling was

included. How the extra R1 900 charged for similar competing products is justified I would very much like to know.

The photo shows three El Paso slips, two of which I have had for some 20 years. The one with the long zip and unused pockets is nearly ideal for a 28" barrelled gun. The other well-used one for a 30-incher was a bit cheaper, having a very short zip and no pockets. It has occasionally got wet, and was a real problem to dry out, taking days. Both have leather-reinforced muzzle-ends and excellent webbing-backed leather slings which, unlike the wider nylon slings, do not slip off your shoulder nearly so readily. I would add, however, that for optimum security, the sling needs to go over your neck, not just over one shoulder. The lighter-coloured slip is the birthday present and of a more modern synthetic material. Being a traditionalist I prefer the older slips! 



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The Double Rifle Primer

By Cal Pappas

CAL PAPPAS has emerged as one of the world's true authorities on double rifles and, being a retired teacher, he combines this passion with the ability to write well, capturing and holding the attention of his readers. The cognoscenti will have come to appreciate Cal's ongoing input to online discussion forums like Accurate Reloading, and his past contributions to our knowledge of the classics in *The .600 Nitro Express* and *The British Bore Rifle*. The *Double Rifle Primer* is his latest offering, and he states his case thus: "When shooters gather and discuss rifles, often they will talk on craftsmanship and quality, hunting dangerous game on the Dark Continent of Africa, big bores, or any number of topics. Of all the forms and types of rifles made in the last few hundred years none equals the double rifle. No finer firearms exist than a best quality double rifle."

Pappas doesn't see himself as a technical writer, though anyone who delves into something as deeply as Cal has into double rifles, becomes, over time, the go-to source for many people wanting information. He modestly says that he takes shooting and hunting with double rifles out of the technical world and places it into the practical world. He doesn't just write about, say, a .600NE – he brings it to Africa, carries it around all day, and hunts with it. In the months leading up to his safari –

probably years, in fact – he will have spent hours at the reloading bench and on the range, getting the very most out of whatever rifles he will be using. I first had the pleasure of meeting him when he was in Africa a couple of years ago to hunt with a beautiful old John Wilkes .600 Nitro.

Pappas was familiar with what John Pondoro Taylor had to say about the .600NE's knockout value – he cites

African Rifles and Cartridges as his favourite book – and in June of 2013 he put Taylor's claims to the test on Barry Styles's Buffalo Range Safaris on the Chiredzi river. He says, "I have always been interested in a comment of Taylor's. He states, 'A .577 will keep an elephant down for anything up to about twenty minutes; a .600 for close on half an hour.' Many have disputed this as fact and many read it, as did I, with interest but no actual experience or proof."

Early one morning, Pappas came upon some hippo slowly moving out of the water to sun themselves on a small island in the river. For an hour or so he watched from the high bank as the herd

moved ever so slowly into the sun. One bull stood out, mainly because of how scarred he was; he was small enough to have been a cow. The author watched him for nearly an hour, and eventually concluded that the small bull was blind. Cal already had his hippo trophy from a hunt in the Selous in 2006, so he decided to take the blind bull.

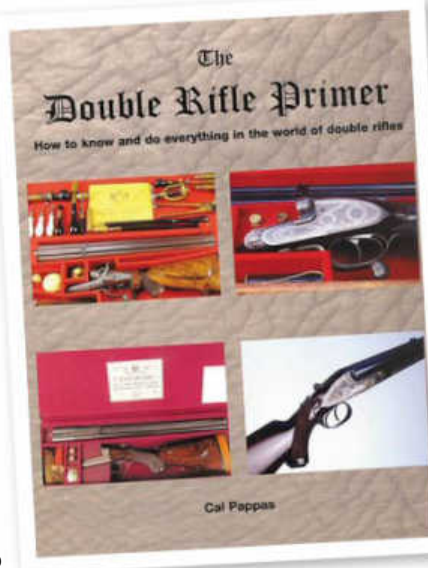
Cal continues, "I aimed for the

centre of the triangle between his eyes and the top of his head and gently squeezed the trigger. The perfect brain shot! The hippo's legs folded up under him and he dropped straight down. About ten minutes had elapsed and what did I see? The hippo began to kick and try to get up! There was nothing else to do but to shoot again in wonderment, which I did – twice – and

the hippo breathed his

last. Or so I thought. He stopped kicking with a pair of shots to the neck. A quick left and right and he was again still. After nearly the same ten minutes, perhaps a bit less, he began to kick again. Two more shots in his body finally put the quietus to him. Now, I had some detective work to do."

continued on page 67 ▶





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A Family Heirloom



A view of the breeching arrangement, with the unusual feature of a hammer side-lock and a heavy breech, mated with a round standing-breech more commonly found on a double-barrel gun.

RECENTLY I WAS shown a single-barrelled 12-bore shotgun which had been in the family for many years and remained in regular use – in fact a family member proposed to use it that very afternoon to exterminate a snake wrapped around the kitchen stove.

It had a top-lever action, a Damascus barrel and a very old-fashioned side-hammer lock. The top of the barrel bore the name H Arthur Ward who, we later found out, operated out of the Alpha Works, Birmingham, during 1879-1900. The underside of the barrel was clearly marked, "Trade Mark Alpha" which would seem to confirm this. The proof-marks were from Birmingham, but badly struck and dating to before 1904. They were incomplete, which indicated manufacture outside the United Kingdom, as any such firearm still had to pass some limited form of English proof before resale through any British agents. The 'finishing up' of foreign-made parts into complete firearms with English names was common enough in those days.

To put this shotgun into its historical perspective, similar examples may be found in the Scholefield and Goodman catalogue of 1905, which lists a similar model priced at £1.15.6 for the plain example and £1.19.6 for the choke-barrel model. A mid-range Greener hammer gun of the time would have cost around £ 8.0.0, so the Ward example was a relatively cheap firearm in a common class of import.

THE WARD WAS stamped with a "13". What did that mean, given that the family fired 12-bore ammunition through it? Well, in the early days of breech-loading shotguns (say 1870-1880) there were no real standards for bore and chamber sizes. They were just "nominal", because that's how muzzle-loaders had been built for the preceding four hundred years. If you could get your shot and wads down the barrel without too much force, then the gun would probably shoot just fine.

When muzzle-loaders were converted to breechloaders, or when

gun-makers started making breech-loaders with muzzle-loader barrel-making equipment, they found that they needed to produce a great variety of ammunition to fit all of those odd sizes. That is why there were such things as 14-bores, in addition to 24-bores, 28-bores and 32-bores, but by the time of the First World War, rationalisation had taken place and we were reduced to the standard 12, 16 and 20-bores that we have today.

HOWEVER, DURING the transitional period there was already a requirement that barrels had to be gauged at the proof-house to confirm their actual size and be marked as such. This meant that bores of 0.710" (call it 18mm) were actually 13 bores, as opposed to 0.729" (call it 18.5mm) for a 12-bore.

However, with low-powered black powder as a propellant, it was possible to chamber a 13-bore barrel for a 12-bore cartridge and with generally light English shot loads, it would work pretty well, even if the cartridge was technically oversized for the bore. So the Ward was probably a 13-bore with a 12-bore chamber.

It gets worse. In the 1880s shotgun barrels were formed by twisting red hot iron ribbons around a mandrel and welding the resultant tube up.

A top view showing a badly worn "H Arthur Ward Birmingham" which fits in with everything else we can discover about this arm.

These forge-welded barrels were called "twist" or "Damascus" barrels and were intended to withstand the pressures generated by black powder, which they did pretty well.

But time passed on. After the 1890s, black powder was replaced by nitro powders which pushed pressures up and many twist barrels couldn't take the strain. Not only was the pressure higher but the new powders kept the pressure up for longer to attain a higher velocity, so more metal had to be put further down the barrel to contain the lengthened pressure curve.

Cartridge lengths went from 2½" to 2¾" and then to 3". Shot cartridges were originally closed with a 'roll crimp', but these were replaced by a 'star crimp' which was longer. When the shot went off, these crimps unfolded and all of that paper had to get out of the way somewhere. In addition, gun

Below: A view of the action flats, showing incomplete Birmingham marks and "TRADE MARK ALPHA" which is consistent with H Arthur Ward's Alpha Works address.



actions way back then were made out of wrought or other kinds of malleable iron. They took black powder pressures well and under overload would distort rather than shatter, but later on were



replaced by proper gun steels which could take higher pressures.

So what is the bottom line with this fine old H Arthur Ward shotgun? The name and limited number of proof markings put the date of manufacture back to the days before nitro cartridges. It most likely never underwent the full English proof. On top of that, the "13" mark indicates that the bore is 0.710" diameter, which is a lot smaller than the 12-bore at 0.729".

THIS MEANS THAT when we pop off a modern 2½" 12-bore cartridge in this gun, we are actually creating an overload when the nitro-powered load, which the gun was never intended for,

from the action so the whole thing is now loose. Worse, if we look closely at the flats under the barrel, fine lines or cracks can be seen which could mean that the locking lugs (or 'lumps') under the barrel are about to give up under the strain.

CAN THESE OLD shotguns be refurbished to a safe shooting condition? The answer is no. Their actions can be tightened up but really, it is the modern ammunition that is the problem and with a low value weapon such as the Ward, there is no point in fixing it up unless the shooter wishes to hand-load



Above: A view of the barrel flats showing poorly struck Birmingham marks, including an indecipherable bore marking within the diamond which ought to indicate the chambering. If proof marking conventions are being followed, the "13" means that this is in reality a 13-bore, which is unusual for the 1880-90 period.

squeezes past a star-crimp it was never intended for, down a 13-bore barrel which is a lot tighter than a 12-bore. This does not bode well in terms of chamber pressures.

How do we know this? Well, unsurprisingly, the barrel has stretched away

black powder cartridges with the lightest of loads, just to show the grandchildren how guns shot in Oupa's day. Otherwise, just retire it as an heirloom and look for something better at your local gun shop.

The snake, by the way, being preserved from annihilation, went away on its own. 

Adelino Serras Pires

1928–2015

AFRICA HAS LOST one of her finest and most devoted sons. Lifelong professional hunter, outfitter and conservator, Adelino Serras Pires, suffered cardiac seizures and died in the ICU of a leading Pretoria hospital on 10 August, 2015. He was almost 87 years old. I have known few men who loved Africa as he did, and none who was drawn back to her with such compulsion after having suffered so many of the crushing losses and disappointments that post-colonial Africa can inflict upon those who love her.

Born in Portugal, Adelino, with his mother and siblings, docked at Beira, Mozambique in late December, 1936, when he was eight years old, to join his father who had established businesses in Tete on the Zambezi river. Adelino was educated as a boarder at Prince Edward High School in Salisbury, Southern Rhodesia, where he played for the first rugby and cricket teams, and won academic honours. From boyhood, he became fluent in one of Mozambique's main indigenous languages, chiNungwe, as well as others. His first job was with Goldfields of SA, prospecting and hunting buffalo to feed the 800-man workforce.

IN 1946 Adelino's father, José, acquired a 12,000-acre tract of virgin wilderness below Guro Mountain, an area later known as Coutada 9, where he developed a magnificent farm on which the family settled. The region was awash with big game, including black rhino. No licence was required for elephant, and lion were considered vermin. Adelino became a keen hunter, leading a highly adventurous life.

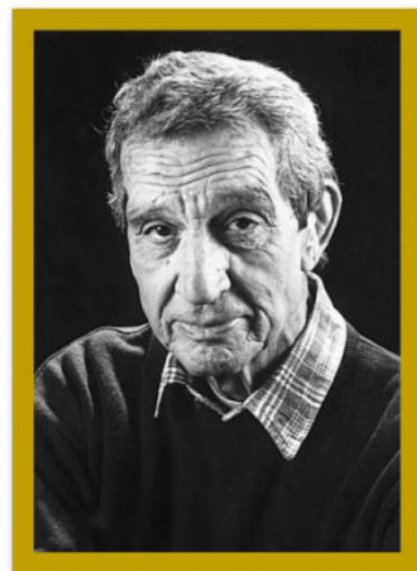
In 1953, Adelino fell in love with the Gorongosa Game Reserve. Partnered

with a Travel Agent in Beira, they built a tourist camp in the game reserve and started promoting game-viewing and photographic safaris. He married Henriquetta, a Mozambique-born Portuguese, and they raised a son and two daughters.

Adelino wanted to conduct hunting safaris, but found that Americans then were reluctant to hunt in non-English-speaking African countries, preferring British East Africa. Undaunted, he marketed his safaris in Europe, mainly Spain, and was an overnight success. From there it grew, and during his long career his clients included European aristocracy, Giscard d'Estaing the President of France, and later, when his reputation reached America, moon-walking astronauts and gun-maker Roy Weatherby to name but a few. He conducted Big Five safaris on the family farm and on other concessions. He was living the glorious life that only a courageous, entrepreneurial, pioneer settler in primitive Africa could live. He loved Africa, its game, its people and his life.

FROM 1960, the British and European powers began granting their African colonies self-rule. That year, the Belgian Congo became independent and promptly burst into the flames of tribal war. Horror stories of whites, including nuns, being raped and butchered, made headlines. Discontented tribes throughout the subcontinent began forming resistance movements.

Adelino was opposed to the policies of the Lisbon government whom he considered greedy looters with no regard for those Portuguese who had made Mozambique their permanent home and intended to stay. The Serras Pires family were much loved and



respected by the local tribespeople for the facilities and assistance of every kind that the family provided for the tribespeople who worked or resided on their farm. However, this caused clashes between Adelino and the Portuguese authorities. Adelino also guided hunts for the Safrique consortium, becoming its international marketing force, and later for Safarilandia.

ADELINO WATCHED as Britain abandoned Uganda, Kenya, Tanganyika, Nyasaland and Northern Rhodesia to self-rule, and he saw the tribal division and conflict that resulted. When Ian Smith's government unilaterally declared Rhodesia independent (UDI) in 1965, Adelino used his family's import-export business on the Rhodesian border to enable him to become a major sanctions-buster for Rhodesia.

In 1972, Frelimo, Mozambique's main resistance movement, moved their attacks south into the 'white' areas. The Portuguese authorities suspected that Adelino was supporting Frelimo, which he never was. The Frelimo guerrillas were from the north and had no regard for the local tribespeople who had shielded the Serras Pires family, and attacks started taking place near the family farm.

In 1973, Frelimo attacked as Adelino's hunting clients were disembark-

ing from a plane on the camp landing strip, and a prominent Spanish surgeon was killed. April that year brought a left-wing military coup in Portugal; the Portuguese army conscripts in Mozambique refused to continue fighting and turned a blind eye to Frelimo attacks on white Portuguese settlers and property. In 1974, Lisbon transferred governance of Mozambique to Frelimo with no elections taking place, and the country descended into chaos.

MOST WHITES LEFT, and since it was impossible to continue safaris, Adelino moved his family to Rhodesia, while he went to establish a safari outfit in Portuguese Angola. He was no sooner set up there than the new government in Lisbon repeated what they had done in Mozambique, plunging Angola into civil war along ancient tribal lines. Again, the whites fled the country.

Adelino rejoined his family in Rhodesia, where he was able to acquire a hunting concession in a remote area of the Zambezi valley which no other outfitter wanted as it was in a 'hot' area of terrorist activity. It went well until August 1976, when the Land Rover carrying Adelino's PH and two Spanish clients hit a landmine which killed both clients and a tracker. This, together with the fact that Rhodesia was rapidly becoming overrun with guerrilla insurgents from newly independent Mozambique, pretty much put an end to Rhodesia's safari industry.

ADELINO'S NEXT move was to Kenya, but just as he was about to begin safari outfitting there, in May 1977, the Kenya government banned all hunting. And so his travels and travails continued, his next move being to the Central African Empire (aka CAR) in 1978 to take over management of a safari hunting operation. This went well enough until 1980, when the CAR government banned lion and elephant hunting, the latter due, as usual, to the involvement of senior officials in ivory poaching.

During all these years, Adelino made frequent trips to the USA and to Europe,

where he renewed his friendships with people in high places who had been his clients, and he hunted on their estates. One such contact resulted in his promoting a safari company in the Sudan until 1984, when that country too, banned hunting for political reasons.

Then Adelino, in partnership with American Bert Klineberger, negotiated a 10-year contract for a hunting concession with the government of Zaire (Congo) who had just re-opened safari hunting again after a lengthy ban. Adelino had signed up a full season's clients when President Mobuto, offering neither warning nor explanation, suddenly banned all hunting in Zaire once more – the cognoscenti said it was for Africa's usual reason: official involvement in ivory poaching.

*He was always
knowledgeable,
helpful and obliging
– he was a thorough
gentleman of the
old school*

Adelino then signed on with Hunters Africa, an American-owned safari company who were buying out an existing hunting company in Tanzania and wanted Adelino to manage it. Adelino's son Tim Tim, his nephew Caju and Rui Monteiro joined him in Tanzania, and his first client was Giscard d'Estaing, ex-President of France, who enjoyed a very successful safari.

Then Adelino's life changed forever. As Giscard d'Estaing flew out, Adelino, Tim Tim, Caju and Rui were arrested by Tanzanian secret police in collaboration with Mozambique government agents, bound and blindfolded and flown to Mozambique in President Nyerere's private jet. Adelino's wrists and ankles were tied with strips of rubber inner-tube stretched very tightly and left

on for fourteen hours; his hands and feet swelled to the size of balloons and turned black. The agony was beyond belief, not to mention the fear that gangrene setting in would require their amputation.

It turned out that someone with a grudge had spread numerous lies, one of which was that Adelino had been assisting Renamo, the Mozambique resistance movement busy fighting a civil war against Frelimo at that very time, covertly assisted by the South African Government. The four men were systematically tortured and starved during five months of interrogation in Mozambique and in Tanzania, each being told the others were dead. Were it not for the efforts of Hunters Africa and the international hunting community, together with the political influence of Giscard d'Estaing being brought to bear on the Mozambique government, no doubt the four would never have been heard of again. The full horror of this story is told in *The Winds of Havoc* by Adelino Serras Pires as told to Fiona Claire Capstick (Rowland Ward).

ADELINO RETIRED to SA, where he married authoress Fiona Capstick. It was Fiona who introduced me to him, and I lament that it was only in the last decade of his life that I knew him. He was a wonderfully interesting, entertaining and cultured host, and he retained his deep concern for Africa's wildlife to the last. I would phone him when I needed information on recent rumours of giant sable in Angola, or on the Mozambique of yesteryear, and he was always knowledgeable, helpful and obliging. He was a thorough gentleman of the old school.

Adelino is survived by his widow Fiona, a son and two daughters, three grandchildren and two great grandchildren. In accordance with Adelino's personal wishes to his beloved Fiona, his ashes were scattered at an idyllic spot on the upper reaches of the Zambezi river to the strains of Mozart's clarinet concerto – the dominant theme on the *Out of Africa* film track. 

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■ Collector seeks any firearms manufactured by FN, Browning, Colt, Winchester, Marlin, any condition. Charles 082-447-8131 (031).

BOOK SHELF CONT

◀ continued from page 61

"On shore we began the task of cutting him up for camp meat as well as to check for the paths of my bullets. The final body shots were easy to locate but the head shot was bit to the left. The neck shots would be found later upon skinning the head in the skinning shed. Here is what was found: the brain shot was to the left of centre and missed the brain by a small amount. This shot knocked the hippo down and out instantly as if brained in the truest sense. He was not dead, but he was out – for ten minutes. Of the next two shots, one went through his neck, passing through soft tissue and did no real damage. The second neck shot was basically the same as the brain shot as to instant results. The 900gr Woodleigh solid hit the spine and broke the vertebrae but did not sever the spinal column. Again, the shock of the bullet knocked the bull down and out, but not dead! The final two body shots penetrated the heart and lungs and he was done. Finally. In my own amateurish way, Taylor's theory was proved correct. Who can argue with Taylor?"

My point here is that Cal Pappas walks the talk, and this is the sort of author we should be reading. In *The Double Rifle Primer*, he treats us to a hard cover with 182 pages of fact, lore and technical specs on the world's finest doubles and the ammunition that was made for them. He goes into the vagaries of buying and selling a double, reloading for a double, and shooting one of these fine old classics. The text is augmented with dozens of the highest quality colour photographs to round out the package.

The book sells for \$70. Contact him on pappas@mtaonline.net to order. – **Ira Larivers**

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English Sporting Championship

THE INTERNATIONAL Clay Target Shooting Federation's 3rd World English Sporting Championship was held over two days in October at the Paarl Gun Club in the Western Cape. The championship was shot over 200 targets across 30 stands. Each day, each competitor shot 100 English Sporting targets in varying combinations of pairs. After the first day of the World Championship, three English competitors were on a score of 91, and three on a score of 90, including an English Junior. The highest-scoring

South African shooters (Colin Mostert and Kobus Myburgh) were on a score of 87 each. South Africa's junior Nicholas Neofitou was on 79. On the second day, all changed. Windy conditions did their best to test the shooters' skills. On the final day a "Super-Squad Final" is also shot, when the top five competitors go on to shoot a further 25 targets in order to establish the final ranking. After a nail-biting Super Squad Final, Martin Myers from England won the day and was crowned the ICTSF World English Sporting Champion. His competition score of 186 and a final score of 16 put him two targets ahead of the runner-up.

For all the results go to <http://www.ctsasa.co.za/competitions/results/>.

English Sporting is the ultimate sporting discipline in Clay Target Shooting for anyone wishing to learn how to shoot sporting targets. English Sporting can be adapted for any type of competition to suit any level of shooting ability. Clubs can use English Sporting to generate income both on practice and club competition days. Targets are always presented in pairs which create the perfect foundation from which to learn the necessary techniques for shooting sporting targets. It's also cost-effective for the shooter because only one cartridge per target is used. Most competitors use 12ga shotguns, although smaller gauges are allowed. Anyone interested in this type of shooting can contact me at the Clay Target Shooting Association of South Africa at <http://www.ctsasa.co.za/> – **Sarah Kalell**

Tall Tale

ONE OF THE GREATEST fallacies commonly believed by the general public is that "the camera never lies". Judging the length of anything from a photograph can be risky, whether trophy horns or even something like a snake. In most cases you'll probably be wrong.

A favourite trick to make a trophy look a lot bigger than it really is, is to have the hunter move back a pace or two behind the animal and squat down, while the photographer moves in close to the animal's head and shoots from a low angle. The effect is further exaggerated by the use of a wide-angle lens. This combination distorts perspective, making the head look huge in relation to the hunter, creating the illusion of a "larger than life" trophy.

Similar photographic trickery is used to exaggerate the apparent size of dangerously poisonous snakes, creating lively debates. What you



see is not always what you get. Johan Marais, CEO of the African Snakebite Institute, sent us these three photographs illustrating how changing the distance of the person in relation to the dummy snake affects our perception of size. Again, the person holding the snake just moves back, away from the camera, while holding the snake at arms' length so that it is closer to the lens, and the wide-angle lens makes the snake look bigger. (Most mik-en-druk (simple



point-and-shoot) cameras and cell-phone cameras have slightly wide-angle lenses as standard.)

Physically measuring the snake from head-to-tail is the only way to determine its true size. Never kill a snake to determine the length and do not handle poisonous snakes. I am no Ionides; on the contrary, I have an instinctive dislike of snakes, but these, like all other animals, deserve to be protected and handled with respect. – **Phillip Hayes**

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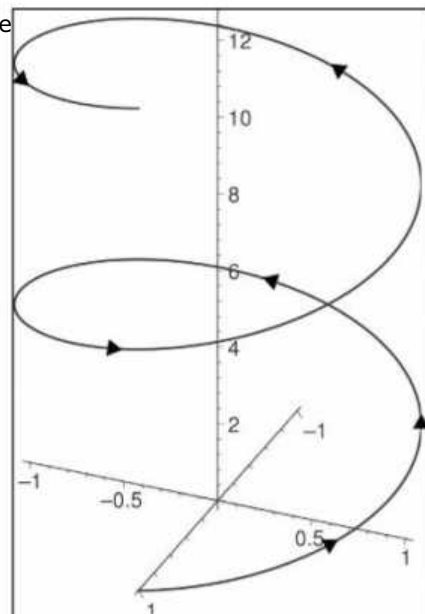
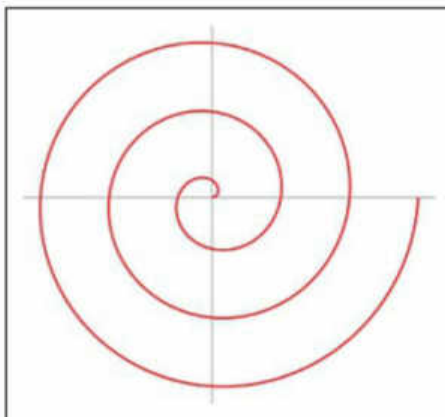
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GALLERY

Spiraling Helix

IN THE ARTICLE "Rifling Myths" (October 2015 edition) the captions of the illustrations at the bottom of page 62 were reversed. The description in the article on page 63 gives the correct description. The spiral is on the left, the helix right. We apologise for the error. – Editor



Shotgun Sights

FAST TARGET acquisition with a shotgun during a sport shooting event can give you that fraction of a second advantage. The 'Hi-Light Shotgun Front Sight' is an inexpensive snap-on shotgun front sight with four colourful interchangeable fibre-optic sticks. The sight bases for shotguns with ribs come in four different sizes, and there is another for shotguns without a rib. It can be installed easily at the range by any shooter. The sight snaps over the rib or barrel. Those that fit over the rib have three small magnets and a small cavity into which the gun's bead fits. When using the type that clips over the barrel, ensure

the bead is directly beneath the hole when installed. Fitting the sight over the bead prevents it from moving during recoil. The light stick provides a bright bead that facilitates fast target acquisition. The sights retail for R260. For more information, contact Ihawu Shooting Centre on 031-705-3150.

– André Grobler 



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